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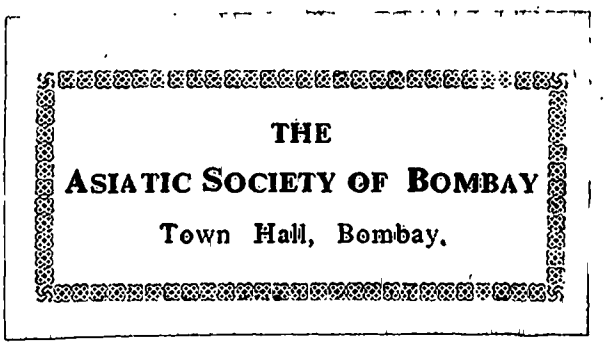

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MADAGASCAR,

PAST AND PRESENT.

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WITH

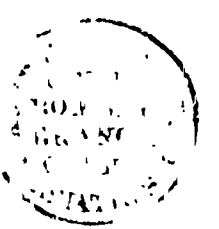
CONSIDERATIONS AS TO THE POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE;

AND AS TO

THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIAN CIVILISATION.

BY

A RESIDENT.



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MADAGASCAR,

PAST AND PRESENT.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Island of Madagascar, has awakened hitherto but little general curiosity in the English breast; nor does it appear to have seriously occupied the attention of those to whom, as legislators of their country, the subject might have been expected to present a larger share of attraction. Some few there are, indeed, who, taking a nobler and less contracted view of semi-barbarous countries, than is confined to the question of their eligibility as stages whereon to gamble at the game of conquest, have regarded the present territory as an object of especial interest and solicitude. The number of these, however,

is unhappily but small, and bids fair to become even smaller, should not some more effective measures be adopted to enlist the attention of men's minds to tales such as those which the modern history of Madagascar discloses.

The wholesale system of slaughter which for many years past has been, and still is being, enacted, in that benighted quarter (and this, too, partly as a consequence of our own attempt to introduce civilisation into the country,*) is a circumstance, the knowledge of which we might have thought, *à priori*, would have excited universal interest in a nation like our own. The atrocities in ques-

* An illustration of this statement is to be found in the following fact:—Soon after a Missionary School had been established in the capital of Madagascar, by the consent and under the auspices of King Radama, the parents of the native children, which were the objects of instruction, conceived the notion that their sovereign was in league with the missionaries to obtain their sons and daughters under pretence of instruction, but really for the purpose of *selling them into slavery!* In consequence of this apprehension "many parents," says Ellis, in his "History of Madagascar," "actually hid their children in their rice-holes, where several of them died, suffocated by the heated and confined air of these subterraneous granaries."

tion have been publicly and circumstantially laid before us in the interesting "Narrative" of Messrs. Freeman and Johns on the Persecutions of the Christians in Madagascar.

In that little work, the number of lives which have fallen a sacrifice to the cruelty and caprice of the present sovereign of Madagascar is computed to be upwards of 100,000,—and this guardian of her people, Queen Ranavalona, has worn the diadem as yet scarcely more than seventeen years.

We shall quote the very passage, which contains this astounding assurance, from the "Narrative," which now lies before us. "The policy of the queen, during the last seven years, has been to exterminate all the male inhabitants of the conquered provinces capable of bearing arms, and to reduce all the rest to slavery. It may be estimated that no less than the fearful amount of 100,000 men have been murdered by the queen's troops since her accession. A few only of this number have been killed while actually fighting; the rest has consisted of those who had laid down their arms, promised submission, and committed themselves into the power of their

deceitful but remorseless enemies. More than double that number, including women and children, has been captured and shared among the troops, or sold into domestic slavery through various parts of the island." *

Events of a political nature have recently transpired, which render it probable that Madagascar will occupy, ere long, a larger share of public attention than heretofore. And in anticipation of such an event it is, that the writer of these pages has essayed to put the reader in possession of some of the most pro-

* "A Narrative of the Persecution of the Christians in Madagascar," by J. J. Freeman and D. Johns, formerly Missionaries in the Island, p. 26.

One hundred thousand is greatly short of the number actually slaughtered, up to the present time, under the queen's orders or name. Messrs. Freeman and Johns wrote their account of the persecutions in 1840–1; but since the date of their information, which was not carried down to a later period than 1835–6, the system of wholesale butchery has been greatly on the increase.

Mr. Griffiths, the oldest living missionary of Madagascar, calculated the deaths, directly and indirectly occasioned by the queen's wars and barbarous usages, at the fearful amount of *one million* of adults, of which a large majority were males!! The latter gentleman made this statement publicly from the pulpit in Mauritius, prior to his return to Europe.

minent features which have characterised the civil, religious, and political history of that island, subsequent to the period to which Ellis has brought down his account of it.

Since the possession of Mauritius by the English in 1810, Madagascar, we have reason to believe, has been frequently pressed upon the attention of the British Government, but the claims of this extensive and important territory would seem to have scarcely ever detained their serious meditations beyond the moment. It is not easy to offer a satisfactory explanation of this circumstance. The unhealthiness of the island (which, by the way, has been greatly over-rated) can scarcely be advanced as a reason to account for it; for why, on the same grounds, do we not relinquish such possessions as Scinde and Sierra Leone? And if our right to interpose in a foreign territory be doubted, it should be recollected that Madagascar was formally taken possession of in the name of Great Britain during the early period of our occupation of Mauritius, by right of conquest, in 1810.*

* "Soon after this period" (viz. the peace of 1814), "a proclamation was issued by the Governor, Robert

"It was justly regarded by a French writer, at the close of the last century, as capable of indemnifying France for the loss of St.

Farquhar, Esq. (afterwards Sir Robert), taking possession of Madagascar, as one of the dependencies of the Mauritius, in the name of His Britannic Majesty."—ELLIS, *History of Madagascar*, vol. ii. p. 110.

To this brief statement of Mr. Ellis we may add the following explanation:—No sooner was the Isle of France possessed by the English, than, on examining its archives for statistical information, it was observed that Madagascar occupied a place in every Record, and in a thousand "Gazettes Officielles," as a regular "dependency of Mauritius," together with Seychelles, Rodriguez, &c. &c. Such being the case, the Governor was perfectly "*in order*" in proclaiming Madagascar as a possession of England, by right of conquest. And his Excellency lost no time in exercising his right, by investing Tamatane, Foule-pointe, and other points on the eastern coast of Madagascar, at which several places the King of England was formally proclaimed. This official title continued to figure in the "Mauritius Government Gazette" for several years; until at length, on the resumption of Bourbon in 1815 by the French king, the resident French in Madagascar threw off their *five* years' allegiance to England, and declared themselves subjects no longer of Great Britain. Others again, who happen to be natural born subjects of Mauritius, remained, and found it convenient to call themselves British. About this time, and in consequence of our treaty with Radama, we relinquished our pretensions to Madagascar as a possession.

Domingo; and with equal propriety it has been represented by an English gentleman, intimately acquainted with this subject, as having capabilities to render it of more worth to Great Britain than all her possessions in the West Indies."

France, for many years, it is true, has occupied a minute speck in the island of St. Mary's, on the east coast (which she has held since 1825); and, still more recently, Nosibe, or Noss Beh, another island on its north-west side; contenting herself with this insignificant part of the prize until, perhaps, her influence in the southern hemisphere may enable her to throw the mask aside altogether, and pour an army into the capital of the country from the settlement she has formed upon the west coast;—to which end, such an object would be greatly facilitated by the propinquity of Nosibe to the river Betoiboka (falling into Bembetoka Bay), whose waters would convey an invading force to within a week's march of Tananarivo, the seat of government!

"There are many events in the womb of Time, which *will* be delivered."

But more of this by and by. We hasten now

to furnish the reader with some idea of the island itself.

Madagascar, situated in the Eastern or Indian Ocean, and forming, if we may so speak, the sea or outer boundary of the Mozambique channel, has, from its relationship to that continent, as well as from its general dimensions and importance, been denominated, and not inaptly, "the Great Britain of Africa." In extent, it has been computed as considerably larger than our own island.

"From Cape Amber, or Ambro (its northern extremity), situate in lat. 25° 40′ S., Madagascar extends southwards about 900 miles to Cape St. Mary, its southern point, which is in S. lat. 12° 2′. The breadth of the southern part of the island is about 300 miles; the northern portion is narrow, and it is widest in the centre, where it is about 350 miles broad. It has been estimated to contain 200,000,000 acres of land; but 150,000,000 would probably be a more accurate computation."*

* Ellis, "History of Madagascar," vol. i. p. 2. This writer has committed a strange error in his calculation of the above latitudes, having inserted north for south, and

The early history of this island, in common, more or less, with that of all the others belonging to the Æthiopian Archipelago, is enveloped in deep obscurity. The two very different races which now people the island attest, however, the remarkable fact, that Madagascar has not been colonised from a single source alone. But at what period of the world's history the settlement of either or both of these people was effected — in what relative succession, and in consequence of what temptation or revolution of events, will probably for ever continue to lie behind the veil of the past. It seems, however, to be generally agreed upon, that one of these two people is of Malay descent; whilst the characteristics of the other bespeak them unquestionably as of African origin: on which

vice versâ. His own map might have enabled him to rectify his incorrect account of the latitudes; but in the *longitudes*, the *map itself* is *wrongly* drawn out, inasmuch as he has assigned to it a degree *too much*. In his estimate, too, of the breadth of the island, he is not quite correct; the southern breadth should have been stated at 200, and that of the northern portion 350 miles. In the text it will be observed, that we have inserted Ellis's own account of the dimensions, latitude and longitude, of Madagascar.

account we may conclude that the neighbouring continent has contributed, at some period doubtless very remote from the present, to engraft a shoot from its own stock upon the island. The missionaries state, as the result of a close examination of Marsden's "Dictionary and Grammar of the Malay Language," that the dialect of the Hova people, who inhabit the interior, is Malay in all its general features, and in many thousands of its roots; and this dialect extends to the eastern coast without losing its identity, whilst the features and character of the people are manifestly cast in the Malay mould. On the western coast, on the contrary, the *Sakalane* tribes exhibit the African type, but of the Caffre form, and not in any degree, as we might expect, of the Mozambique or Negro cast of form and feature.

For many generations prior to European intercourse with Madagascar, it would appear that this island had been a common mart to Arab, Indian, and other eastern traders. But the first distinct notice of it that has reached our own time was that of the Portuguese navigator, Marco Paulo, who published his

account as long ago as the close of the 13th century. It was not, however (according to Ellis), until three centuries after its existence had been made known by that adventurer, that Madagascar attracted the particular notice of Europeans; at which time the Portuguese established a settlement on its coast. About the middle of the next century, it appears to have become an object of cupidity to the French; for at that time it was (about the year 1642), that "a patent was granted by Cardinal Richelieu to Captain Rivault for the exclusive right of sending ships and forces to Madagascar and the neighbouring islands, in order to establish a colony or plantation for the promotion of commerce."—ELLIS, vol. ii. pp. 6, 7. Such appears to have been the earliest connexion of the French with Madagascar; and such the original title upon which that people set up their present claim to a settlement on its coast. Notwithstanding this, it does not seem that the natives at the moment offered opposition to the settlement of the French amongst them. But it was not very long before the encroachments of these intruders, and the exercise of unprecedented

cruelties towards the people of the soil, occasioned them to be an eye-sore to the Malagasy, and an object of their bitterest hatred and continued animosity; whilst, at the same time, the refinements of European vices and civilised methods of cruelty and retaliation were introduced to the minds of the natives, already but too well versed, in common with semi-barbarous nations in general, in the arts of rapine and murder. In a word, if we may confide in the statements of Ellis upon this point, it will not be too much to say of them, that they

> "Left upon the new-discovered clime
> No art save that which added crime to crime—
> That taught the barbarous nations they despised,
> What vices may enslave the civilised."*

The island is divided by the Hovas, who pretend to have subjugated its scattered tribes, into twenty-two departments or provinces, which, in their turn, are subdivided again into smaller sections: of these, the province of

* *Vide* the beautiful modern poem entitled "Polynesia; or, Missionary Toils and Triumphs in the South Seas," p. 17.

Ankova is by far the most important in the catalogue, as well, perhaps, in virtue of its own pretensions to greater culture and salubrity as that it is the seat of the capital. This province occupies the very central point of the island, so that the reader will be pleased to remember that the sovereign holds her august court, and transacts the affairs of government, in the interior of her dominions, and consequently far away from the sea coast. Tananarivo (the capital), is distant from Tamatave (the principal port of Madagascar, situated on its eastern coast) about 300 miles, or thereabouts. The term "Ankova" receives its name from the derivatives *any* and *hova*, two words signifying *there* and *at*. The writer specifies the derivation of this particular province, inasmuch as mention will be frequently made, in the course of the following pages, of the Hovas, or the people of Ankova, who occupy the same sort of pre-eminence in Madagascar which the people of Athens and Sparta did in ancient Greece. In connexion with the two distinct races of men which inhabit Madagascar, we may remark that the same two species, namely, a light-coloured and a black, appear to people

all the larger islands of the Indian Archipelago, as, for instance, Borneo and Sumatra; but with this remarkable difference, that whilst in those islands the light-coloured Malays are seen to occupy the maritime provinces, and are allowed to be eminently a maritime people, the provinces of the interior are far less civilised, and are occupied by the more decidedly black inhabitants of the land. In Madagascar, the reverse of this picture obtains; for in that island, the Hovas, or the Malay descendants, who are also the light-complexioned, are the more civilised and enterprising of the two people, and wonderfully assimilating to the characteristics of their parent stock — the Malay; whilst the tribes who inhabit the sea-coast approximate more nearly to the Negro conformation, or to the various darker races of the Indian Archipelago.

With regard to the salubrity of Madagascar, a subject upon which it has been pressed, from the earliest moment, with a larger share of obloquy than it deserved, it may be affirmed that the north-east coast of the island is healthy and free from fever,

which perhaps is likewise the case with a strip of the extreme south coast. These parts of the sea-coast offer a solitary exception to the fact, that fever is the general characteristic of the maritime districts. The province of Ankova is, for the most part, perfectly free from jungle fever, and possesses a bracing climate. We think it is Ellis who remarks that the thermometer, in the province of Ankova, is sometimes down to 30° in winter.* The capital is particularly salubrious; a quality it is principally indebted for to the elevated site which the province itself enjoys, as well as to its isolated condition from the surrounding country. Ankova is so devoid, moreover, of wood, and particularly of brush-wood, that

* In the cold season, we can ourselves state, that the thermometer is frequently as low down as 40°, at the capital, — nay, occasionally, at 38°; whilst the rice-grounds are invested with hoar-frost in the early morning. The *variation* of the same instrument is, occasionally, most remarkable in the same part of Madagascar; and has been seen sometimes to rise, at 3 P.M. to 80°; whilst it was not more than 40° at 6 A.M. on the same day. Some of the missionaries were unable to support the cold in winter, without all "the means and appliances" to which we resort in our country for warmth at the same season.

much is doubtless due to this circumstance for the comparative immunity from disease which the natives of that particular district are observed to enjoy. ..

There can be no fair grounds for supposing that the island might not be stripped of more than half its terrors (arising out of the present pestilential character of the sea-coast, and of many of the inland districts), were the soil submitted to proper processes of draining, and the numerous swamps, which every where abound in the country, converted into maiden soil. Such an achievement as this, together with the total removal of the brush-wood from the affected districts, would go far to turn the scale of salubrity in favour of Madagascar. And had King Radama been spared to. his people, it is not unlikely that the indefatigable English agent (by whom he allowed himself to be counselled in every thing affecting the interests of his country) would have brought him to undertake an object, upon the success of which the very existence of the island, as a flourishing state, may be said to depend. Still, the very limited intercourse which Europeans have ever effected with the less fre-

quented parts of Madagascar, leave us much in the dark as to the comparative healthiness of different districts in the island.

The dreaded fever of the country assumes every variety of character and type, although information at present is wanting to explain upon what particular phenomena the circumstance is dependent. In illustration of this, we may inform the reader that, at a place about fifty miles north of the capital, the air is so laden with death, that a residence, of no matter how short a duration, is generally fatal to the party visiting or resorting thither by compulsion. Such a person, without evincing any of the phenomena of fever, may present the spectacle of one suddenly overpowered with tetanus (or lock-jaw), and be carried off upon the spot. We think it not unlikely, however, that the presence of carbonic acid gas in this and similar situations may be the true solution of their fatal effects upon animal life. At another district, on the contrary, to the west, and distant about fifty or sixty miles from Tananarivo, the fever is also endemic; but here it is so very mild, that the symptoms

disappear almost as soon as manifested, and leave no prejudicial consequences behind.

The government of Madagascar is vested in the person of an absolute sovereign, who exercises the most debasing form of feudal dominion over her subjects; regarding their lives at about the same standard of value as Dom Miguel was wont to set upon the dogs which, in his day, infested the streets of Lisbon! The only difference existing between the potentates of the two countries, when regarded in this point of view, being, that whereas the latter preferred to exterminate the surplus dog population with his own royal assagay, the Queen of Madagascar is content to *spear her people* by delegation to others! But we anticipate.

The first distinct glimpse we obtain of an executive power in Madagascar appears to arise out of the circumstance, that individual communities originally seem to have yielded, by common consent, a sort of servitude to the person most prominent amongst them for age, talent, or for strength. The latter, availing himself of a disposition so favourable to views

of power and ambition, succeeded by an easy gradation in procuring for himself the title of ruler or chief: he became also the judicial referee, and the functionary whom all were glad to conciliate, or, in other words, to *bribe*. The chieftain, or "headman" (as he has sometimes been called), once secure of the services of his fellow-villagers, soon proceeded to extend his dominion over those whose power might be less firmly cemented, and thus to annex new territories to his own, or to enlarge the site of that in which he had originally set up his authority. It is not difficult to understand that, in proportion to the degree of violence or of arbitrary rule which might be exercised by individual chieftains, opposition would arise amongst their subjects, and intestine commotions be occasioned by the restless or the daring; but what appears to have been still more fatal to the continuance of such a scheme of government upon any lasting or solid grounds, was the jealousies continually springing up amongst themselves (the chieftains); and hence the unceasing prevalence of petty wars and consequent exterminations, wherein we recognise nothing

materially differing from the manner in which the earliest approximation to government has been developed in more civilised countries, and in those less unknown to us than the present.

Trials were carried on in the open air—a custom which, even at the present day, is retained; and the verdict was pronounced by the entire voice of those who might chance to be present (for any spectator had the privilege of speaking); and execution of the sentence immediately followed.

At length, about fifty years ago, the father of the present sovereign's immediate predecessor (and whose grandiloquent name, for the gratification of the curious, we insert), Andrianampoinimerina,* subdued all his neighbouring chieftains, took possession of the present capital, and extended his power from forty to sixty miles in every direction around, radiating from that point. Still, however, throughout the dominions of this prince, a measure of

* Literally, He who is in the heart of Imérina;—Imérina being a principal division of Ankova, and occasionally used to designate the entire dominions of the sovereign—as king or prince of Imérina.

honour and authority was retained by the descendants of the ancient headmen or chieftains. They could express their opinion freely in the public deliberations; they had a fair share in the booty captured in war; and they were allowed to exercise their right over the feudal vassalage of those who had originally acknowledged their authority.

About the year 1810, the sovereign above mentioned died, and was succeeded by his son, a very young man, to whose name we shall frequently have occasion, throughout these observations, to refer. That name, though far less imposing to the ear, was destined to become infinitely more remarkable in the history of his country. Radama is said to have had many of the shining qualities of his character handed down to him from his father, who contributed greatly to place his kingdom upon a secure foundation, and to augment the resources of the country, antecedent to his son's accession to the throne. The father had been an ambitious prince, and his views appear to have extended to nothing short of the entire subjugation of Madagascar. Nevertheless, Radama succeeded by no means to an

idle or absolute sceptre; for his predecessor was still tributary, at the time of his death, to some of the neighbouring provinces. These Radama was not long in freeing himself from; and organising, soon afterwards, a part of his army on the European discipline, he had occupied the throne of Madagascar but a short time before he caused the power of his arms to be felt and his authority to be acknowledged. His progress, however, towards this dearest object of his wishes was by no means conducted over a bloodless path; for the native Malagasy of some of the provinces are a brave and determined people, and but little formed by nature to surrender so sweet a boon as freedom without a struggle. An incident is mentioned somewhere (we think, in Ellis), that is highly illustrative of the character of some of the tribes of this country, and corroborates, in a remarkable degree, our eulogium of their bravery.

Radama, having carried an army into a province which declined to recognise his authority, sent forward an herald to threaten annihilation to an encampment which had taken up a position to dispute his progress.

Upon receipt of his summons to surrender, an answer was returned that the Hovas had better advance and receive, in their own persons, what they demanded. Thus defied, Radama gave the martial word "forward!" to his troops, and an attack was commenced. The besieged disputed every inch of ground, and disdained to sue for quarter; but borne down by numbers, they suffered themselves to be slaughtered, preferring death at their posts to an ignominious pardon. They were worthy of a nobler fate. When Darius sent ambassadors to the Grecian republics to demand "earth and water," in token of subjection to him, we are told that the demand was acceded to, in Athens, by one of the heralds being thrown *into a well,* and the other immured in a cavern, where they were told to help themselves to their "earth and water." The reply of the invaded Malagasy chiefs was as remarkable for its dignity as that of Athens for its cruelty and disregard of the law of nations.

CHAPTER I.

Prevalence of Idolatry and Superstition—Infanticide—Trial by Ordeal—Divination and Astrology—The Giant's Tomb—Theory in Relation to the World's Form and Nature—The Slave Trade—Efforts for its Abolition—Elevation of Radama to Sovereign Power—Introduction of Missionaries.

LIKE all barbarous and semi-civilised nations, the people of Madagascar are sunk in the most deplorable state of idolatry and superstition. Theirs is the land, the *very temple*, we might be allowed to say, of religious superstition!* and to such an extent do they yield obedience to its control, that it is scarcely less concerned in the depopulation which,

* In connexion with the word *religious*, it may be stated that all the clans hold some "one day in the week as more sacred, favoured of the gods, or more lucky than the rest; some, however, regard Friday as that day, others Saturday, and others Sunday."—ELLIS, *History of Madagascar*, vol. i. p. 147.

during the last twenty years more particularly, has been going on in the land, than is the ruthless hand of war itself. In proof of this statement, it would be unnecessary to mention more than the single fact, that every child which is born on an unlucky day or hour (and the number of these is quite at the will of the astrologers), is destroyed upon the spot; whilst the same fate often awaits others who may be ordered to be sacrificed merely in consequence of a single malignant symptom frowning upon their birth-day. The same amount of superstition, and the same cruelties arising out of it, are common throughout the various clans or tribes in the island. They are diversified only in their manner of celebration, and but little in degree. Thus, "all practise trial by ordeal, but the ordeal itself, and the mode of its administration, differ. All employ the '*sikidy*,' or divination, but have different modes of working it."*

This sikidy, or divination, is unceasingly in requisition, and is regarded as infallible amongst the miserable dupes upon whom it is

* Ellis's "History," vol. i. p. 147.

practised; and the belief in its infallibility is the more incomprehensible, inasmuch as the several impotent contrivances which are resorted to, in order to the working of it, are so indifferently disguised, that it seems as though a child might detect the fact, that the materials are designedly disposed in order to bring about the result which the diviner himself desires. But our surprise at this seeming incongruity is lessened when we revert to the celebrated sikidy of one of the most wonderful people of antiquity, the Delphian Apollo; a specimen of imposture which supported its reputation so uninterruptedly through ages, and with such unquestioned success. The worthies in Madagascar, who practise the thriving trade of divination and astrology, contribute, as we above remarked, in a fearful degree, to the destruction of life. Some check had begun to be put upon this wholesale system of murder by Radama; nay, that prince had, we believe, successfully put a stop to it in the immediate vicinity of the seat of government: but it has since been re-introduced, and is now, perhaps, resorted to even more than at any former period; for her ma-

jesty Ranavalona is, in her own person, wedded to the particular species of superstition we are speaking of, namely, that of soothsaying and divination.*

The contrivances resorted to for the destruction of infants† when once doomed by the

* "The divination seems to be in constant requisition by the queen. She could scarcely venture to take even an ordinary meal of rice without having it worked ten or a dozen times."—Note to "Narrative of Persecutions in Madagascar," p. 60.

† The natural relish which seems to exist in the bosom of Heathen nations for infanticide is very peculiar and mysterious; and to whatever point of the Pagan world we direct our eyes, a common bond of sympathy in this particular indulgence would seem to exist. Dr. Mac William, in his recent account of the Government expedition up the Niger, informs us, that at Ibu, or Aboh (a settlement within the Delta of that river), human beings are occasionally offered up in sacrifice; whilst twins are in all cases put to death; and children who cut their upper-jaw teeth first are instantly destroyed! (A *benign* form of legislature that of Ibu, to be sure!)

Again, in Williams's "Narrative of Missionary Enterprise," it is stated, that on questioning three native women at the Tahitian and Society Islands, as to the number of infants which they had respectively murdered;—the first said, "I have destroyed *nine;*" the second, "I have destroyed *seven;*" and a third admitted that she had destroyed "*five.*" "Thus three individuals, casually selected, had killed one-and-twenty children!"

astrologers to die, are not the least atrocious features distinguishing this dark page in the history of the people under our notice. Thus, a common *modus operandi* for the attainment of this end, is that of exposing the unconscious babe in a narrow passage, through which a herd of cattle is furiously driven, and by the feet of which it is scarcely possible to avoid being mangled and tortured by a gradual death!—at other times it is suspended by the heels, whilst its face is held downwards in a pan of water, until suffocation ensues!—or, still more horrible to relate, it is sometimes buried alive, with the head downwards, in a pit especially dug for the occasion. And this atrocious murder is, in regular order, commanded under the queen's authority, to be perpetrated by the *father* or *nearest relative* of the infant! An incident, very characteristic, in the writer's opinion, of the taste of the Malagasy for *cruelty*, is mentioned by Ellis, in the second volume of his "History of Madagascar." One of King Radama's sisters being ill, her four female attendants were subjected to trial by ordeal, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent the poor helpless

wretches in question had been accessory to her sickness. The Tangena ordeal discovered *three* out of the four to have been instrumental thereto, and they were adjudged, as a matter of course, to *instant death!* "The supposed criminals were then taken to a rock on the south side of the capital, and, *having their fingers, toes, arms, legs, noses, and ears cut off,* were precipitated from the rock, the children from the surrounding crowd amusing themselves, for nearly an hour after, with throwing stones upon their mangled bodies." The historian goes on to state, that *not one anxious or sympathising* countenance was to be seen amongst the spectators, many of whom were females. Amongst the *dramatis personæ* who were exerting themselves in the praiseworthy pursuit of converting the dying victims into a *target* (as above stated), two younger brothers of the king were prominent characters.

It is almost superfluous to remark to the reader, that the *ignorance* of these benighted people keeps pace with their superstition; because the one is the immediate offspring of the other. But a single instance of this may not be out of place, in elucidating the cha-

racter of the Malagasy. In the province of Ankova, the tomb of a renowned *giant* of old is the object of fervent adoration; it is *firmly believed* by them, that he was once engaged in single combat with the *moon;* whilst he could gather whatsoever was asked of him from the opposite extremity of the world, without relinquishing his seat! This highly-endowed individual possessed a Pandora's box full of *useful* qualifications, of nearly a similar description.

The geographical and astronomical theory of the Malagasy philosophers in relation to the world's form and nature is, that we live on a flat surface, encompassed on all sides beyond the sea (for they are aware that Madagascar is "in the midst of the waters"— an island), by a solid sphere let down upon us, which is the horizon. They entertain no doubt, that one might climb up this horizon on its outer side, supposing they could only transplant themselves thither; and innumerable are the fables founded upon the history of such arduous enterprises, encountering the great God, and so forth! One of the first questions which they put to a white man has immediate rela-

tion to the said sphere. "What is the horizon? Is it made of gold or of pearl, of wood or of stone? And upon such ideas of astronomy they have built up a system of judicial astrology, that is the means of annually consigning thousands to a violent and early death; the justice, however, nay, the necessity of which, is for the most part respected and confided in by the *vox populi* of the country. And as

> "The widow'd Indian, when her lord expires,
> Mounts the dread pile, and braves the funeral fires,"

so, in Madagascar, the verdict being clothed with all the sacredness of predestination, the victim bows himself to the decree!

Soon after the din of war had ceased to be heard in the southern hemisphere, the governor of our newly-acquired possession, Mauritius, began to look around him for a more effectual and less expensive means of suppressing the slave-trade, which was in open operation between the foreign purchaser and the native proprietor of Madagascar;—a market, indeed, which had hitherto offered an inexhaustible supply of captive labourers to Bourbon, and

even to the Isle of France itself. In order to bring about such an object with the surest success, Sir Robert Farquhar formed the project of elevating some native chieftain to universal dominion in Madagascar, and of inducing and enabling him to suppress the said traffic by municipal institutions. The prominent character of Radama at once pointed him out as the fittest and most natural instrument for this purpose. Intent upon this excellent object, Sir Robert never slumbered upon the matter, until his exertions were productive of all the success which his benevolent heart had designed. He sent an emissary to the capital of Madagascar, who, partly by the promise of liberal supplies, (by way of indemnity), such as fire-arms, soldiers' clothing, personal presents, and the like — but still more, perhaps, by ministering to Radama's master passion, viz. ambition and a love of praise, succeeded in bringing over the king to the views of his patron, and to the entering upon a treaty with Great Britain for the unconditional suppression of the slave-trade in his dominions! To cement this good understanding, the English governor under-

took to forward (and at the expense too of his own government) a certain number of such of his subjects as Radama should appoint, to Great Britain, where they were kindly received and carefully educated; and on their return to Madagascar, artificers and workmen accompanied them, in order to furnish the island with the means of becoming acquainted with its own hidden riches and resources.

A specific stipulation was also proposed and agreed to by the king for the admission of missionaries into Madagascar.

To add still more weight to the control of Radama over his subjects, Sir Robert Farquhar put a fresh engine of power into his hands, by furnishing him with the means of initiating his soldiers into the European system of tactics. Sergeant Brady was the only survivor of several individuals entrusted to the sovereign for that important object — a non-commissioned officer serving, we believe, with his regiment in Mauritius — and, as an earnest of his majesty's satisfaction with the selection, Mr. Brady soon arose to the highest military dignity in the country, and became a general almost before he had time to step

out of the ranks into the atmosphere of a commissioned officer! With such an argument to enforce his wishes as that of a disciplined army, Radama encountered but little successful opposition to the claim which he now set up to the entire sovereignty of Madagascar.

The agent from the British government, who in past years had been located at the port of Tamatave, now went to reside at Tananarivo, the capital; and so successful did he prove in exerting an influence over the mind of Radama, that that chieftain consulted him on every act of importance connected with his management, alike of the internal government of the country, as of its relations with other states. Indeed, for his person the king conceived a sincere and ardent attachment; and too much credit cannot be awarded to Mr. Hastie for the moderation and good sense with which he exercised this control.

No sooner had the treaty for the suppression of the slave-trade been ratified by Radama, than that prince set an example of sincerity and earnestness in the performance of his part of the engagement, which reflects

the highest honour upon his character, and is a pattern which it would be well if more civilised potentates would imitate. To those who have any acquaintance with the circumstances relating to this treaty, it need scarcely be mentioned how unwarrantably it was broken off by an individual, who was temporarily holding the reins of government at Mauritius in the absence of Sir Robert Farquhar in England.

The return, however, of the governor to the colony, and the indefatigable address of Mr. Hastie at Tananarivo, united to the personal influence of the latter over Radama's mind, succeeded at length, but not without the greatest difficulty, in restoring the confidence of the Malagasy chieftain in the honest intentions of the British government. Radama again renewed the treaty, and evinced all his former determination to compel the exporters within his kingdom to relinquish the traffic; and to convince Mr. Hastie, not less than themselves, that he was in earnest, he enacted a law proclaiming it death to him who should thereafter violate his dictum in connexion with the exportation of slaves from the island. And this law, we have reason to believe, was

really enforced in the case of some few refractory man-stealers.

King Radama had yet to be taught that slavery was a crime in itself, and that on account of its own inherent wickedness it should be suppressed.*

For the attainment of this latter object, the British government, as already noticed, had stipulated with the king for the introduction of missionaries into Madagascar, to which they were at that auspicious moment anxiously seeking access. And this brings us, in the natural order of our detail, to the consideration of that epoch in the history of the island.

* The following statement will serve to convey an idea of the extent to which slavery is encouraged, even in the administration of the laws of Madagascar:—

"Those who borrow money, without being able to refund it, or those who incur debts which they are unable to pay, are taken into the public market to be sold for payment of what they owe. A man, his wife, and children, are thus frequently sold together, unless some friend should come forward and become his surety, or pay his debts. Thousands of free people have been reduced to slavery by this means; and this is a law which is generally carried into effect without any mitigation of punishment. If a debtor has property, that is seized to pay his debts, often with compound interest at sixty per cent per annum; and if that be insufficient, he is sold in the market; and if the

The native mind of the Malagasy had imbibed an insuperable dread of, and hatred for, the religion which, both by the Portuguese and early French intruders, had been rather forced upon than offered to their notice. Pursuing that line of bland and persuasive eloquence, in Madagascar, which it has ever observed in Christendom amongst the indisposed and the refractory (and which may be briefly summed up in the well-known arguments of "*fire* and *sword*"), the propagators of the Romish mummery had left behind them prejudices so deeply rooted in the native breasts against

produce of his sale should still be insufficient to satisfy his creditors, his family must share the same fate. A man who has become surety for another is exposed to similar treatment, if unable to meet the claims substantiated against the person for whom he has become surety."—ELLIS, *History of Madagascar*, vol. i.

There is a curious coincidence between this state of the law in Madagascar at the present day, and the original Athenian enactment upon the same subject, where "an insolvent debtor might be taken as a slave, and his wife and children also, if less would not satisfy the debt."—Vide *History of Greece*, published under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, p. 20. This law was afterwards abrogated by Solon.

that particular form of faith, that the people have frequently since evinced their determination not to suffer its re-appearance amongst them! And, what is not to be very much wondered at, the native bosom conceived, for some time, a natural antipathy to the re-introduction of the Christian religion, under any guise, when rumours began to circulate of the expected arrival of our missionaries. But, upon this head, all opposition was borne down by the king; and the people had but one course before them, which was to furnish their quota of children required from the respective villages to the government schools, which were ultimately to comprise upwards of sixty villages, and not less than 5000 scholars in daily attendance. In all this, the king was seeking merely and exclusively that "knowledge" which is most directly "power;" but, with scarcely the remotest idea of its adverse bearing on the superstitions of his ancestors!

The missionaries (to the number, at different times, of between eight and twelve) were accordingly received at Madagascar, and entered upon their arduous undertaking with

more than usual promise in a heathen country. The sovereign was their immediate patron, and the English representative the active organ of forwarding their interests with the government.*

Had Mr. Hastie and the king been spared to the country for even a few years longer, there is every reason to believe, that not even

* During fifteen years (namely, from 1820 to 1835), "the whole of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were translated, corrected, and printed in the native language, at the capital, aided by very liberal grants from the British and Foreign Bible Society; not fewer than 25,000 tracts, aided by the prompt and generous encouragement afforded by the Religious Tract Society, were printed; Russell's 'Catechism' was translated, and an edition of 1000 copies generously given by Mr. Cameron, a member of the mission. Nearly all these publications were put into circulation. The number of schools increased till they amounted to nearly 100, containing, nominally, about 4000 scholars, to whom were imparted the elements of instruction and of religious truth. Probably, some 10,000 to 15,000, altogether, passed through the mission-schools during the period under review. Elementary books were provided for the use of these, and probably as many more were distributed among those who voluntarily acquired the art of reading without attendance on the mission-schools."—*Narrative of Persecutions*, &c. p. 75.

the under-current, setting in so strongly upon Radama from his own courtiers, would have been sufficient to interrupt the steady advancement of Christianity and of mental improvement; inasmuch as, although the king himself had not as yet avowed his personal contempt for the idol-worship of the country, and forbore to commit himself by openly embracing the new religion, his mind was, nevertheless, so perceptibly expanding under the discipline of European intercourse, and more than all, also, under the anxious tutelage of his friend, Mr. Hastie, that a much longer adherence to the ignorance and absurdities of his people would have been incompatible with the light which was bursting in upon it from every point to which its vision was directed. Mr. Ellis recites a curious, yet interesting, anecdote in confirmation of this, as it bears directly upon the suspicion which he began to entertain of the infallibility of the idols,* to which

* It would draw us into a very long digression to afford the reader even a general idea of the nature, the attributes, and the influences of the idols of Madagascar. Suffice it to say, that belonging to different tribes, are attached an

he had blindly knelt and succumbed. The people of a village in Ankova betook themselves to Radama, for the purpose of soliciting a piece of fine cloth wherewith to invest their idol. "Why, surely," said Radama, "he must be very poor, if he cannot get a piece of cloth for himself. If he be a god, he can provide his own garments!" On another occasion, his subjects complained to him of the "injurious tendency of the schools" (meaning

unmeaning block of wood, of almost an indescribable form, which the people invest with the power of curing diseases amongst them, favouring them in war, procuring rain, removing calamities, affording riches, and so forth: they are consequently regarded with the highest veneration. All these idols have their "fady," that is, something which they abhor, and which it would be sacrilege to take within their holy precincts. This fady may be, in one case, a pig, in another a goat; but, in the eyes of one famous idol, a "snail" is dreadful beyond all other objects of pollution. They are not themselves directly objects of worship, but are rather talismans, or charms, against evil. In public proclamations the queen invariably names the idols as supporting the kingdom, and herself on the throne of her ancestors. Ranavalona acknowledges herself as entirely indebted for her crown to the idol "Rakelimalaza" —the little but renowned one (as his name signifies), and to "Ranahavaly"—the *aide-de-camp* of the other;

thereby the seminaries established by the missionaries). "Our children are forsaking the customs of our ancestors, and forsaking our gods." "Do you mind your work," replied the king, "and let the children mind their instructions."

CHAPTER II.

Death of Radama — Usurpation of the Crown by one of his Wives — Queen Ranavalona established on the Throne — Her Cruelties — Murder of Prince Rataffe — Ignominious Dismissal of the Agent of the British Government, Mr. Lyall — Progress of Christianity checked — Restoration of Idol-worship — Persecution of the Christians — Vassalage of the People — Starvation — Prevalence of Theft — Decree to prevent the Practice of the Arts out of the Government Premises — Permission granted to learn Reading and Writing — Consequences of not obtaining this Permission — Seizure on the Property of Europeans — Atrocities committed by the Queen.

Upon the death of Radama, which took place at about his thirty-eighth year, the crown of Madagascar was snatched surreptitiously from the brow (scarce as yet cold) of its recent wearer, and placed upon that of one of his wives, whose daring and decision enabled her to outstrip the legal claimant (or

rather those in whose hands his interests were reposed) in those preliminary measures, upon which the success of any candidate in a barbarous country, whether lawful or otherwise, must, usually in a great measure depend. In short, by engaging those upon whom she could rely, and by intimidating others, the present queen contrived to raise a party who carried her irresistibly over the heads of all opposition, even up to the steps of the throne, upon which her own address immediately seated her. During the public meeting ("rabary") which the queen convened to declare her accession to the nation, and at which it was pronounced, by the proper officers, that the "Idols had named Ranavalona as successor to Radama," it happened that four individuals protested against the usurpation, remarking that "they could not, whatever might be the consequence, conceal the fact, that the late king had named Rakotobe and Raketaka (Radama's own daughter), as the party to succeed him." They had scarcely given this proof of their fidelity to their late sovereign, than twenty or thirty spears were plunged into them by the bystanders, and

they perished on the spot. This decided the whole question!"*

No sooner did she find herself secure upon the throne of Madagascar, than she proceeded to rid herself of every member of Radama's family, whose pretensions might by possibility disturb her subsequent repose, or whose knowledge of the late king's intentions, well-known loyalty, or noble rank, were calculated to give force to their testimony against her usurpation.

Amongst the number was that of Prince Rataffe, the father of the immediate heir-apparent to the throne, and the brother-in-law of the last king. This prince had been selected by Radama in 1820, to head a mission or embassy to England; and his mind seems to have been unusually awakened, as a con-

* "Narrative of Persecutions," p. 11.—The reader will perceive some little obscurity here. The authors of the "Narrative" make the four officers alluded to to say, that the king had named *two* individuals as his successors to the throne, and that one of these (Raketaka) was his own daughter. The same gentlemen remark, at p. 7 of their "Narrative," that "Rakotobe, the eldest son of Radama's eldest sister, was the recognised heir-apparent up to the time of Radama's death."

sequence of that visit, to the softer influences of human nature. "There were also evidences," according to Ellis, "that his mind had been enlightened, and his heart changed by the power of divine grace." A mock-trial condemned him to death, even in his absence; and he suffered the usual mode of death by spearing almost immediately after his appearance at the capital. His pregnant wife received the same doom not very long after him. And here we shall put on record, in order to brand it with the infamy such an act deserves, a fact that occurred in connexion with the fate of Prince Rataffe in 1828. When Radama died in July of that year, the former was at Tamatave with his wife. The queen summoned him to proceed forthwith to the capital; but learning either there, or on the way up to Tananarivo, that her majesty only required him in order to have him put out of her way by a violent death, he earnestly entreated the master of a vessel then in the roadstead to allow himself and family a retreat in his ship. The merchant captain (whose name was Parsons), peremptorily declined, on the plea that the owners of the

ship might incur some loss or responsibility by such an act, but admitted the practicability of serving the unhappy prince in the way he pointed out; for the residence of the latter was on the beach, and within an easy distance of his ship. Poor Rataffe then prevailed on an English friend to address the governor of the Mauritius in his favour, and point out the urgency of his position; an appeal to which immediate attention was paid by his excellency, who hurried off two English men-of-war to his rescue (one of which was commanded by Lieutenant Brownrigg); but both of which arrived at their destination too late to save him or his family. Had they succeeded in rescuing Prince Rataffe, the destinies of Madagascar would, in all probability, have undergone a material change.

Queen Ranavalona, not less ambitious of the entire sovereignty of the island than her predecessor, called together her army as one of the first public steps of her new authority, and prepared to give her distant subjects a taste of her parental solicitude! Several of the chieftains of provinces, who were not quite near enough to Ankova to have imbibed a

faithful estimate of the new monarch's character, displayed any thing but an immediate readiness to put their necks unconditionally within the yoke; and many of those who had consented to acknowledge the king, considered their allegiance by no means due, as a matter of course, to a woman. In accordance with this latter feeling, not a few persisted in this ground of objection and died, asserting the necessity which the country laid under of a male supremacy. One sturdy old chieftain, being suspected of a refractory spirit, was challenged by a royal detachment to yield up his arms and acknowledge the sovereignty of the queen. "What!" he exclaimed, "would you have me submit to a woman? Should I do so, tell me how I am to render an account of the matter to my wives?" The veteran being somewhat of a pluralist in this last respect, the consideration seemed to surround him with difficulties he had not thought of perhaps before. The spears being raised in reply to this inquiry, "Spear away! then," said he, and presenting his bosom with a firm front to the soldiers, his life paid the penalty of his principle and of his bravery.

Such is the monarch at whose court the British government had an accredited agent at this very period! Although permitted to wear his head upon his shoulders, he had scarcely been suffered to represent the interests of his country at the capital eighteen months after Radama's death, when he was suddenly dismissed from Tananarivo, and that too in a manner the most ignominious and insulting that could even have been imposed on the humblest individual of her own country. Mr. Lyall was not permitted to make arrangements for the removal of his family or household property; but, like a criminal who had forfeited every claim to the law's consideration, he was torn from his own hearth, and hastened onwards to the coast, whence he embarked for Mauritius, and died not long after his arrival at the latter! How fair a pretence might not England here have claimed to unseat from her throne the usurper by whom such enormities had been committed! And, indeed, when we received the fearful history of her government from the period in question, and reflect upon the abso-

lute hopelessness of her present policy undergoing any other change than such as must be still more disastrous to her people, it is a subject for every good man's sorrow and concern that the occasion was not embraced by the ministry at that time in power to interpose in the cause of humanity, and remove the present monster from the power she has assumed of sporting with the lives of the miserable natives of that country.

Such an opportunity cannot again occur. An agent from the British government was located at Tananarivo, in virtue of a treaty between England and Radama, and which treaty was confirmed by his successor; and had we asserted a national right to indemnify ourselves for the wrong, even by transporting an army into the capital of the country, Europe must have acknowledged our title to such a step; and France, the only northern power whose jealousy we might have expected to awaken, could have done no more than regret the occasion which fortune had afforded England to be beforehand with herself in legislating for the future interests of the island!

But we shall postpone the further consideration of this important part of our subject until a later period of the present inquiry.

The assumption of sovereign power by Ranavalona was viewed with feelings of the most despondent description by the missionary body at the capital. Nor were they long left in doubt as to the degree of encouragement or toleration which their labours were to experience at her hands. With that characteristic deception which marked her nature, she made a pretence, at first, of cultivating their exertions for her people, and pursued a momentary policy towards them which might have thrown more practised diplomatists off their guard. But the fondling of her majesty was estimated at its proper value by those who were too well acquainted with the fatal character of her embrace; and whilst they continued to labour unceasingly, lest the night should come when no man might work, confining their usefulness strictly within the bounds to which they were given to understand they must limit themselves, they appear to have been ever awake to the probability of some sudden fiat, which, upon the pretence of some

paltry fabrication, should undermine their fabric at its very base. Meanwhile the greatness of that object in which their whole heart was embarked supported and encouraged them to hope, almost against hope, so rapidly did one arbitrary measure of atrocity follow upon another.

> "But still with hope in view,
> The men of peace their hallowed task pursue;
> But vain the creed their faithful lips proclaim,
> For Jesus still is a rejected name!"—*Polynesia.*

The two last lines of our extract from the poem in question (originally designed to apply to the condition of the entire Tahitian people), are here allusive only to the queen's (or the persecuting) party in Madagascar, at the time under review; for incredible almost was the progress which the march of Christianity had effected upon the great bulk of those who had been brought within its sphere.* At length

* It is interesting, and at the same time curious, to observe the discrepance as to time, which has characterised the reception of Christianity amongst the different nations of the great Southern Ocean. In Williams's "Narrative of Missionary Enterprise," it is stated that at Tahiti the missionaries incurred many years of toil and anxiety

their doubts were all dispelled. An unusual excitement in the capital betokened the irruption of some great demonstration on the parts of "the war-party," and orders were issued for the assembling of the people at a kabary, the magnitude of which set curiosity unusually on tip-toe, and raised fears in the breasts of not a few, that the queen would proceed to mark it by a display of cruelty at the expense of some amongst her subjects.

It was evident that the instructions communicated by the missionaries tended to destroy the influence of the national idols, and to bring the customs and superstitions of the country into contempt; and the only wonder

before the word of God took any lasting root in the soil. "And at New Zealand also, to what privations, labours, and perils were the devoted missionaries of the Church Missionary Society called for nearly twenty years, before any thing like a general desire for instruction was evinced by the inhabitants!" "At the Navigator's, on the contrary, in less than twenty months, chapels were erected and the people anxiously waiting for instruction." In Madagascar, instruction was eagerly received from the commencement of the mission in 1818; but it was not until twelve years afterwards that two native churches were formed, and the first converts to the Christian faith baptised.

is that this tendency should not have been fully developed until seventeen years after the arrival of the first missionaries in the island. The idols were supposed to bless the rice grounds, and to render them fertile; to preserve the army, and insure it victory; and above all, to have placed her majesty on the throne, and to keep her there. To the "sikidy" divination she was in the habit of resorting daily; the "tangena" ordeal was her favourite method of unmasking guilt; and these, together with a thousand petty ancestral customs besides, began to be despised by the very children, and were publicly repudiated by the Christians as an abomination! She decided, therefore, to cleave to the customs of her forefathers, and to compel her subjects to do the same. In this great kabary (to which we now allude), Ranavalona declared that she knew nothing of Jehovah and Jesus Christ; it was Rahilimalaza and Ramahavaly (the *idol and his aide-de-camp*) who had seated her on her throne; and her orators, appealing to the multitude, exclaimed, "Is it not so?" and were answered simultaneously, "It is so!" As a natural consequence, it followed that the

worship of these new Gods, Jehovah and Jesus Christ, became *treason*, and was proclaimed so upon pain of death! Her majesty, Ranavalona, was determined that the same *prosperous* state of things should be restored as during the glorious reign of Andrianampoinimerina, the great father of King Radama.

As to the past, the people were pronounced guilty in having gone so far in "changing the customs." In accordance with this decision, they were called on to submit to a heavy fine; and all who had embraced the new faith were compelled to confess their iniquity, to crave forgiveness for the same, and to give an unconditional promise of abjuring it: in a word, to return to their allegiance. The schools were shut up. The books of instruction, amounting to a number sufficiently large to fill an entire house, were returned to the missionaries, to whom the strictest injunctions were sent not to let them be accessible to the people — inasmuch as death would be the reward of any Malagasy thenceforth discovered to be the possessor of a printed book!

These stringent measures underwent no modicum of relaxation; and the missionary

body finding it impossible to abide at their post, except under some jesuitical protest, which neither their honour nor sincerity would have inclined them to, at once took their departure. The last of their number tarried until 1836.

Could the present government of Madagascar have compounded with the European residents at the capital, so that the question of religion might have been altogether dropped, and their knowledge of the arts alone employed for the good of the country, most readily would it have consented to their remaining amongst them. But as the sovereign is wont to concentrate the meaning of the "good of the country" in her own individual person, it was, in reality, to her own profit and aggrandisement that their knowledge would have been converted. Even in the life-time of the king, this was a line of policy so closely adhered to as to have become a principle. Radama, availing himself of the existing feudal laws, which recognise the people as vassals only of the sovereign, appointed certain individuals of his own selection to acquire knowledge under the missionaries and artisans (who

accompanied them to the country), and with whom they were required by him to continue a stated period of years, until conversant in the particular objects of their pursuit. And once that an art or a trade was engrafted upon them, they reverted, in due course, to himself, as vassals of the state! From the very first admission of Europeans into the island, it was distinctly understood that parents were to apprentice out their children, to learn for *the good of the sovereign*, and not for that of themselves! In this manner he availed himself of the services of those who had been giving themselves up to the acquisition of reading and writing, as well as to that of the several handicrafts, which were to bestow upon the people the means whereby their monarchs should the more firmly rivet their manacles! Precisely in the steps of her predecessor did Ranavalona follow, as relates to the fruits which she extracted from the knowledge imported by our countrymen into Madagascar. By the present queen the schools have been drained to fill up the ranks of her frequently exhausted army, as well as for the purpose of supplying the civil departments of her

government; and even the girls, falling under the feudal principle like those of the opposite sex, are drawn from the same source to sew for the queen and her favourites,—nay, more, for the entire army under the sovereign's orders. Thus, several hundred smiths are employed at the capital in the public works; an equal, or perhaps a still larger, number of wood-fellers are compelled to cut down in, and carry timber from, the forests, for the purposes of the queen; and these wretched beings are not only not paid for such work, but are suffered to find the means of sustenance in the best way they can, and at such moments as they can furtively employ themselves, out of view of their inhuman task-masters! There results from this shocking system of servitude not only want in its most hideous aspect, but crime likewise, as a direct consequence of that misery.* Thus, whilst employed unceasingly

* "Unable to meet the demands of the government upon their personal services and their property, and to provide the means of support, multitudes fled from the towns and villages to the forests, formed themselves into banditti, and sought a precarious subsistence by seizing the cattle that might graze in the adjacent country, or plundering

about the interests of another, they have scarcely an alternative between that of starvation and theft. The latter propensity has become, in consequence, a national characteristic; and petulancy walks hand-in-hand with falsehood, of which, in the history of the modern Malagasy, it is the most productive parent.* As long ago as 1825 or 1826, a Mr. Le Gros, the king's architect (by birth a Frenchman, but a British subject of Mauri-

the travellers that passed near their places of retreat. These bands of robbers increased to such a fearful degree, that in the summer of 1835 a considerable military force was employed in suppressing them. Great numbers were with difficulty taken, and brought to the capital, where, in the second or third week in September, nearly 200 were publicly executed, 84 were killed by the spear of the common executioner, 17 were cruelly burnt alive, some were barbarously buried alive, and the rest having been declared guilty by the ordeal of the 'tangena,' were accordingly killed on the spot."— ELLIS, *History of Madagascar*, vol. ii. pp. 517, 518.

* "Lying has, in some cases, been enforced upon the natives, it having been required of every Hova, when speaking with foreigners on political matters, to state the exact opposite to truth, on pain of punishment. So far has this been carried, that it was once a serious and public complaint against Christianity, that it taught the people to scruple at telling lies even to deceive their country's enemies."—*Ibid.* vol. i.

tius), had his premises set fire to by a couple of carpenters, who revenged themselves upon him in virtue of his being the origin, in their eyes, of their unrequited labours. The fate which these misguided men encountered reminds us painfully of Shylock's limited penal code: "The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard, but I will better the instruction." They were *burnt alive* to expiate their offence.

To render the case of the people still more appalling, the queen, in June 1836, decreed a new law, "that any persons happening to acquire a knowledge of the new arts introduced by the Europeans, and venturing to practise those arts for their own benefit, or out of the government premises, under any pretence, should be put to death." This new law deprived at once an immense number of people of their means of livelihood, because they had hitherto dabbled a little "on their own account," albeit at the risk of punishment.

Under the same kind of restrictions other arts and occupations may be introduced into Madagascar, but, alas! *cui bono?* The *rulers* of the people alone could profit by them,

whilst their own miseries would be proportionately increased.

The permission which had been granted by Radama, to the effect that all and any of the people might learn to read and write indiscriminately, according to their own wishes, was so extensively taken advantage of, that soon after the queen's accession she issued a proclamation, insisting that those only should learn to read and write that received her express permission and approval; and that if any slaves who had already acquired such knowledge should be discovered practising such arts, or if any others in future should attempt to study them, all such slaves should have "their bones reduced to ashes, whilst their owners should be dealt with according to the pleasure of her majesty."*

* Inexpressible was the grief of many slaves on this occasion. One poor fellow who, with his wife, was a baptised Christian, was never seen to look cheerful again. His name was Rantanana. He gave himself up to despair; went unnecessarily into the most dangerous fever district, returned, and died. He had been employed at the missionary press, and his wife was subsequently speared to death, with eight others, in June 1840, for their known adherence to Christianity.

"In June 1836, when her rage seemed somewhat abated, Messrs. Johns and Baker, the only remaining missionaries, printed, by permission, 4000 copies of native fables, from a desire merely to keep up the art of reading amongst those who had acquired it. But *these* were not allowed to be distributed,—not even amongst the remnant of scholars in the public schools, who still made the ostentation of assembling to write on slates."

"The effect of this system is, that the people universally execrate the period when they were instructed by the Europeans, and would view any new instructors presented to them, through their own government, as their enemies rather than their friends.

"On the same principle, at the breaking up of the London Missionary Society's mission in 1835-6, the queen publicly declared that all the labour of the Europeans was for the queen, and their property likewise hers. They therefore seized Mr. Jones's garden, valued by him at 340 dollars, and Mr. Chick's residence, left by him on sale. They were extremely angry with the family of Joli-Cœur for buying a movable house from Mr. Baker

for forty dollars; and absolutely (though privately) forbade them to ratify their purchase of Mr. Freeman's house for 400 dollars, as agreed upon. They compelled Mr. Griffiths to sign a paper, stating that his residence and chapel, valued at 3000 dollars, was the property of the queen; and she entirely prevented the sale of every public building belonging to the London Missionary Society. Messrs. Johns and Baker could not even leave these buildings, or Mr. Freeman's* private residence, in charge of a native, without a paper exonerating him from blame in the event of the queen seizing upon them."†

It seems, that the queen had no sooner succeeded in beridding herself of the moral control (insignificant, indeed, as she suffered that to be) arising out of the presence of the missionaries around her, than her natural ferocity broke loose afresh, and with more than accustomed license. About the period in

* The names recited in this paragraph are those of some of the missionaries.

† From an unpublished manuscript by E. Baker, Esq. one of the parties principally concerned in these transactions.

question a military force was despatched by her majesty into the southern portion of the island, where the natives had already acknowledged her sovereignty over them, and sworn fealty to her. What took place upon this occasion, as it occupies the blackest page in the entire volume of the enormities hitherto recorded, we shall acquaint the reader with, by transcribing the entire sketch unabbreviated from Ellis:—

"The negotiations relating to the terms of their submission being completed, and after being induced to give up their arms on the most solemn and repeated promises of the queen's friendship and protection, they assembled, men, women, and children, in the neighbourhood of the Hova army. The men were then required to remove to a short distance, under pretence of taking the oath of allegiance. As striking a pool of water constitutes a part of the ceremony, a low swampy ground was chosen for the occasion. Such was the ostensible reasons of the choice. A darker reason was concealed in the bosoms of the chief leaders of the queen's troops. On the arrival of the natives at the appointed place,

they were surrounded by the soldiers, and were then deliberately murdered. Not fewer than *ten thousand men* were thus basely assassinated on the spot!!

"In these circumstances," continues the writer from whom we are citing, "a number of the chiefs of the southern provinces sent, in the close of the year 1837, the most affecting and earnest application to the British government at Mauritius, denying all right of the Hovas to their country, and praying for assistance to save them from annihilation." *

* Ellis, "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. pp. 520, 521.

CHAPTER III.

Letters from Queen Ranavalona to the British and French Governments — Failure of the Project of obtaining Protection for the Natives of Madagascar — Remissness of the British Government — Monetary Fluctuation — Depressed Condition of Commerce — Value of the Cut Dollars arbitrarily fixed — Oppression and Wretchedness of the People — Their Cunning — Military Authority — The Produce of Labour monopolised as the Feudal Property of the Queen — Cause of Depopulation — Bribery and Corruption — A Capitation Tax — Means adopted to prejudice the English in the eyes of the Natives.

THE reader will probably recollect the circumstance of an embassy from Madagascar having reached the English shores about ten years ago.* But although the parties were intimately acquainted with the demand in which the people of that extensive island stood

* The letters addressed on this occasion by Ranavalona to her well-beloved brothers, King William the Fourth of England, and Louis Philippe of France, are such perfect

for immediate protection and a saving hand, they were doomed to witness the failure of that project, in the attainment of any thing beneficial to the afflicted natives. Not, indeed, that the queen had any other motives in communicating with the British government than those of ultimately riveting more closely the fetters of her subjects! But it was not unreasonable to expect, that the latter might

"curiosities of literature" that we have been at some trouble to obtain a copy of them for the reader's gratification:—

To King William the Fourth, King of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

"*24th June*, 1836.

"This I say to you, my friend, that I have sent letters to you, and you have sent letters to me, and perhaps some of our friendly correspondence has failed to reach its destination. Therefore, I send my ambassadors into your presence to announce friendship.

"Now I did not receive the customary present to Radama, not because I was vexed or angry; but, if friendship is to be obtained by the purchase of money and riches, and to be perpetuated by the exchange of goods, then I did not accept the present. And things which are with us and not with you, you can buy here; and things with you and not with us, we buy from you.

"And with respect to your friendship with Radama,

have embraced the occasion to urge the other (by some such irresistible arguments as might have touched the savage breast in the most vulnerable quarter) to remove the restrictions upon education and the gospel, and to sheath the sword of vengeance for the future. We are aware that some overtures were made to the members of this mission for the readmission of an English agent into Madagascar.

Radama did not export people across the sea; and I, the successor of Radama, do not export people across the sea; whether to you or any other nation.

"May you live long and be my friend always; and may the people of England be always the people of Madagascar.

"May you live long,

"Saith RANAVALONAMANJAKA."

To the King of the French.

"This I say to you, that my ambassadors will visit you to announce friendship. And if things are with us and things not with you, you can buy from us; and if there are things with you and not with us, we can buy from you.

"For I have no enemy across the sea, of whatever nation; but I desire good friendship and good commerce.

"This I say to you. May you live long,

"Saith RANAVALONAMANJAKA."

But the individuals comprising it being scarcely more than animated automatons, had no power vested in them to treat upon such terms—and, what is not improbable, did not even dare to touch upon such a proposition in their narration of what they were intrusted to convey, on the part of the British government, to their sovereign.

The departure of the missionaries, and the growing dislike of the queen's party towards all intercourse with Europeans, together, as a consequence of that policy, with the depressed condition of commerce on the coast, produced a striking fluctuation in the *sandana agio* (or premium on the dollar) in the interior. The origin of this institution was this:—The Malagasy, possessing no other monetary medium of circulation than that derived from the Spanish dollar, and none whatever of their own, were perplexed to discover a means of trafficking in sums smaller in value than that coin. They betook themselves, in their difficulty, to the expedient of cutting the dollar into pieces, and thenceforth issued the latter by weight. At first, a small *agio* was given by the possessor of the whole dollar

to obtain its weight in cut money; but as the cut money would not pass in the maritime provinces, it tended continually to concentrate in the capital, and to exceed the demand that was made for it. In proportion as the trade languished on the coast, a fewer dollars were imported, the mutilated representatives of the entire coin became more generally current, and, at the same time, of less value than the uncut dollar. It resulted from all this, that five cut dollars soon began to be looked upon as an equivalent only to four whole ones. And the sapient monarch, beginning to ascribe the growing pressure of this evil to the enormous rise in the per centage upon sound money, instead of to its true cause, the stagnation of her maritime commerce, legislated in this spirit for the emergency, by fixing the *agio* in favour of the whole dollar at $\frac{1}{16}$!

So deadly a blight does the fostering hand of Ranavalona shed upon her people, that the latter are prosperous or otherwise in proportion to the proximity which they may chance to occupy to the capital. Immediately within the atmosphere of Tananarivo, every one is exposed to the personal observation and cog-

nisance of the government; and society presents accordingly but two faces — the one *oppression*, and the other its effect—*wretchedness!* The latter engenders the natural consequence — *cunning;* and, in the practice of this infirmity (either to assuage hunger or escape punishment), many a wretch pays the forfeiture of his life.

The cruel, drunken, and debauched queen, then, supports her unnatural fabric, as we have seen, exclusively through the medium of *terror*. Yet the influence exerted by that power could not have succeeded so completely in debasing her subjects, were it not for the strength with which it nerves itself through the military organisation which she keeps up, and whereby she holds the chieftains and higher orders of society as much under subjection as the populace. To this engine, therefore, and to the English, who introduced it, very much of their misery is habitually ascribed by the people themselves. In the employment of this power, her predecessor did not entirely forget that his subjects were also his children; and it did not, therefore, react upon their liberties in the

same sense which it has done with herself. Radama still clung to them with the paternal tie. He was, moreover, in his single person, supreme; and the people had, at the worst, to suffer only from the caprice or wickedness of a single individual. But the present potentate is actuated by no such feelings to restrain her conduct; and holding the reins of government with a feeble hand, her paramours and other favourites are allowed to share in the oppression of the people, until "the land is filled with violence!"

Regarded in the above point of view, it will be evident that there cannot be claimed, for our passive interference with the country, an unconditional measure of good, as the result, to Madagascar. On the contrary, not a little harm has ensued upon our efforts to raise her to a higher standing in the scale of nations. But this harm, inasmuch as it has sprung out of unforeseen and extraneous agencies, such as the overthrow of the missionary scheme, and the natural depravity and hard-heartedness of the reigning power, is not to be reflected back upon us, to the disparagement of the means employed, still less to the

support of a line of argument (far from uncommon with some pseudo-philanthropists and politicians) which contends that a "natural state of society can only be depreciated by our attempts to engraft an artificial civilisation upon it. Much as we respect any opinion which may be advanced by such authorities as Messrs. Freeman and Johns, upon the immediate subject of their interesting "Narrative," we by no means unconditionally assent to the censure with which those gentlemen are disposed to visit the active steps which England has taken, in her anxiety for an ultimate improvement in the condition of the Malagasy. The views which these gentlemen have taken upon this point are strongly worded. "Great Britain," they say, "having supplied a handful of men with the weapons of destruction, and taught them how to wield them most effectually by sending a few soldiers to drill the natives, lent herself ungraciously to the task of abetting the ruin of the independence, liberty, property, homes, and lives of thousands and many tens of thousands of the peaceful inhabitants of the island, who had never raised a finger against the British throne,

nor against the Hovas over whom Radama reigned; but who now, furnished with British weapons, could desolate whole regions of inoffensive agriculturists, and glory in schemes of conquest, rapine, and blood—that bane literally filled the whole of Madagascar with groans, and anguish, and death!"* Now, if by this philippic it is intended to be understood that, but for the introduction of European implements and tactics of warfare, as well as but for that of throwing the entire balance of power into a single scale, Madagascar, in common with other heathen countries, would have presented a picture of pastoral simplicity and immunity from bloodshed; why, then, we shall venture to denounce such hypothesis as based upon reasoning which facts, the most incontrovertible, contradict. And that we are not reduced to mere assertions, in corroboration of a position the opposite to that assumed in the present question, the following fact we deem conclusive.

"When, in 1823, Mr. Williams visited Hervey's Island, expecting to find a consider-

* "Narrative of Persecutions," &c. pp. 6, 7.

able population, he was shocked to learn that, by their frequent and exterminating wars, they had reduced themselves to about sixty in number! Some six or seven years later, on visiting the same island, he found that this miserable remnant of its former population had fought with such frequency and desperation, that the only survivors were five men, three women, and a few children; and that even then there was a contention among them who should be king!"*

Here, then, we meet with a direct negative to the assumption, that the savage bosom stands in need of European arts and instigation in order to imbibe a relish for the bloodshed of its fellow-creature.†

If England has been the direct means of organising a disciplined army in Madagascar, and of enabling a single authority to concen-

* Notes to "Polynesia," pp. 99, 100.

† Madame Gatti de Gamond, in her brief exposition of Fourier's remarkable "System," observes — "The savages offer the only image of a primitive and natural society; generally we see them free, obeying those only who please them." . . . . "The Phalansterians enjoy the security of the savage, the absence of care respecting the

trate the entire power of the country in itself, she has enabled that people to exchange a certain and very ruinous evil, namely, that of unceasing petty warfare amongst the numerous chieftains, and consequent exterminations of the natives, for the lesser one of a single controlling influence. Many provinces have thus purchased a degree of repose and happiness to which, before the time of Radama, they were strangers; although, from the abuse of authority of which the Hova governors or commandants are guilty in those provinces, as well as from their liability to be subjected now and then to a visit from a marauding force of their sovereign, their condition is far from one of perfect exemption from sufferings. Nor have the interests of humanity been slightly served in what we have effected for Madagascar, in the suppression of her slave exportation. There we recognise, at least,

morrow: entirely happy in the present, they are not at all beset with insecurity and care for the future!"

This realisation may be met with in the case of the brute creation; but that the description does not correspond with the state of even natural society in our own species, let the history of Madagascar and the South Sea Islands attest.

one positive good we have conferred upon her.

With regard to Imérina itself (the ancestral district of the present family in power), the consequences of our connexion with the country are unquestionably for the worse, under the government of Ranavalona; and, for the simple reason, that those agencies to which we invited the attention of her predecessor, and which, if properly applied, would have afforded the elements of the country's prosperity, have been perverted and prostituted to ignoble ends; and thus, by a reflex operation, inflicted a ruinous evil upon the many.

Thus, many hundred people are forced into learning a trade; but, when conversant with its minutiæ, instead of being allowed to offer themselves as competitors in its exercise, their labour is monopolised as the feudal property of the queen, by whom it is unceasingly put into requisition, and that, as we have before stated, without any sort of requital. This principle runs through the entire catalogue of the mechanical arts. Again, the people think it matter of exultation, if she demands but one

half of the men out of each hundred for perpetual unpaid servitude. The destruction of life occasioned by her prolonged military expeditions, and their annual renewal, has dwindled down many of the former hundreds of the people to twenty, ten, and even five. The effect of this shocking system on the rising generation is most deplorable. Not one woman, perhaps, in seven, can point to a husband; and in regard to those who can, many of them are absent with the army, or stationed at distant outposts. Hence we may perhaps affirm, that not one woman in twenty is the mother of children; and the population is rapidly diminishing. It is affirmed by the natives that, in villages where formerly 500 children might be seen playing about, it is difficult now to number even twenty!*

If the queen, in her own person, is arbitrary and tyrannical, the same license is delegated to her minions: all civil and military service being enacted gratuitously, the judge

* How truly applicable, in this place, are the words of one of the Fathers, in connexion with the early Christian condition of man—"*Prohibere nasci est occidere!*"—TERTULLIAN.

and the general, as well as the bailiff and the private, are equally exposed to the necessity of living upon their wits! The consequence of such a system is, that bribery and corruption, to an unparalleled extent, pervade every department of the state. Hence, the people have an inherent conviction, that justice is only attainable by such as can out-pay the opposite party; and such a debasing example, re-acting upon the character of the mass itself, is a pregnant source of that demoralisation to which the Malagasy mind has arrived.

In order to instil a dislike for Europeans into the native mind, her majesty has had recourse to several expedients, the selection of which reflects no little credit upon her ingenuity. One of these was her apparent readiness, at all times, to afford means of transport for the baggage of the latter backwards and forwards from the coast to the capital; and as the backs of her subjects were the only medium of conveyance, the parties for whose advantage they were laid under contribution became proportionably hateful to them. Another device for bringing about a

similar end was that of levying on the people a capitation-tax, " to pay the white people," at the period that the missionaries were withdrawing themselves from the country. It is needless to remark, that those gentlemen did not receive one farthing of this consolidated fund; but the English enjoyed the reputation, amongst the deluded natives, of having been the instigators of the measure. Again, Ranavalona was in the habit, whilst the missionary schools remained in operation, of draining those seminaries to fill the constant vacancies occurring in the army; until, at length, the people suffered so immeasurably under this system, that they sought to evade the pressure of it by substituting their slaves' children in place of their own. And with the growth of this tyrannous impost upon the dearest associations of their nature, the wretched people transferred their hatred from the active to the innocent instrument of their calamity—from the queen, who enacted the regulation, to the English, who, for their weal and happiness, sought to increase the numbers and prosperity of the schools.

CHAPTER IV.

Enactments prejudicial to Commerce with Europeans—Outrage on British Subjects—Contempt of the British Flag—Captain Heppick offered for Sale in the Public Market of Tamatave—Memorial to his Excellency Sir William Gomm—The Case investigated—The Charge denied—Letter from the Queen of Madagascar—Duplicity of the Queen.

It had long ago been anticipated, as a not improbable consequence of Ranavalona's present policy, that Madagascar would, sooner or later, become closed as a foreign market of commerce to Europeans, even if that was not the direct object which she had in view by the stringent enactments which, from time to time, she had introduced against them. Though this latter design may not yet have been publicly charged against her, yet, for ourselves, we "stand accountant for as great a sin," inasmuch as it is precisely that which, for a long time, we have mentally laid at her door.

The harassing obstacles which she has thrown in the way of those engaged in the bullock-trade can be explained alone, we think, upon this supposition; and none to whom the continuance of that particular branch of commerce was an object of concern, can have felt otherwise than uneasy that her majesty would not let slip the faintest opportunity which might present itself of throwing overboard the interests of those embarked in the same. The reader has, perhaps, to be informed that the British colony, Mauritius, has to look to Madagascar, almost exclusively, for its supplies of horned cattle. Hitherto, an active trade in bullocks had existed between the two islands; and although the growing impediments which her majesty's government had thrown in the way of the native and European exporters had raised their price at Tamatave (the principal point of export), from eight Spanish dollars to twelve and fifteen, Mauritius, nevertheless, had enjoyed an uninterrupted supply of beef as well as of draught cattle from the mart in question. But the moment was at hand when the queen prepared to lay aside further duplicity, and throw off altogether the

mask which, for decency's sake, she had hitherto worn.

The opportunity which she embraced for this demonstration of her real feelings towards the European settlers in her dominions, is a point to which we must now invite the especial attention of the reader; inasmuch as it was the first of a train of outrages to which she has recently exposed British subjects, in common with other Europeans; and arising out of which a recent attack was made upon Tamatave, by a conjoint naval force from Bourbon and Mauritius.

In order to make the reader acquainted with this serious part of our subject, we shall subjoin the copy of a letter which appeared in a local newspaper at Mauritius, dated August 19th, 1844, the contents of which will, perhaps, convey the best idea we could afford him of the particular circumstances alluded to. This letter bore the somewhat unattractive title of "*Les pauvres Anglais!*" and is as follows:—

"The words I prefix as a motto to this communication have been used in reference to the late edifying occurrence of an Englishman being forcibly exposed for sale in the markets

of Tamatave, in Madagascar, by officers acting under her majesty Ranavalona's commission. I will not say if the appellation '*pauvre*' is applicable; that remains to be seen. The British government has endured so much outrageous insolence and contumely from the infatuated and imbecile queen of Madagascar, whom one-half of the armament employed to subdue Mauritius would hurl for ever from the throne of Radama, which she has unrighteously usurped, that I shall not wonder if this indignity also is silently put up with. It is not long since the Sampson, bearing the British flag, whilst trading near Bogana Bay, on the western coast of Madagascar, was violently seized by the queen's soldiers, bulk broken, and the cargo, which had been shipped under their eyes, was re-landed and forfeited, and the captain kept prisoner for some time. The commander of her majesty's brig Cleopatra* arriving soon after, as I have heard, excused the outrage, and gave a written statement to the queen's officers, exonerating them from consequences. Afterwards, by way of

* The writer of the above letter is incorrect in describing the Cleopatra as a brig; she is a sloop of war, carrying 26 guns.

shewing how they regard every act of this kind as weakness and pusillanimity, we learn from the "South African Advertiser," that the Cleopatra having struck upon a coral reef, Lieutenant Molesworth and several of the crew, whilst attempting to lighten her by landing some guns, were barbarously massacred by the Hova queen's soldiers. The officers and crew, as would appear, immediately sailed off, without avenging the death of their companions in arms, leaving the native authorities to put their own interpretation upon their apparent apathy. No sooner does this news reach Mauritius, than her majesty's ship Iris sails quietly off to another station, as if to invite a renewal of Malagasy insolence, by leaving us without the means of obtaining redress.

"Numerous instances of similar contempt of the British flag and name have occurred at Tamatave, and been recorded in your paper; and they appear latterly, as might be expected, to have so increased, as to become the order of the day.

"At length Captain Heppick, of the Marie Laure, a British American-born subject, is

seized on a pretended accusation of suffering seven of her sable majesty's wretched subjects, brought from Mauritius, to be hid in his vessel, until, as is supposed, a gale of wind in the harbour of Tamatave terrifying them, they endeavoured to swim on shore, in which attempt one was lost. Such is the accusation; for that the Malagasy either believe, or expect us to believe, that the captain did or could forcibly detain a man on board his small vessel, open from stem to stern, and crowded hourly by natives from the shore, is wholly out of the question.

"This accusation the captain denies, and of it no evidence exists, except the unsupported deposition of one native. On this evidence, however, the captain is kept a prisoner for months at Tamatave, and put on his trial for murder, in direct defiance of an article in the treaty with Radama, that cases of capital crime laid against British subjects in Madagascar should be referred to Mauritius. At length he is condemned to slavery *(proh pudor!)* and taken, like a bullock or sheep, to the public market-place at Tamatave to be sold, the public crier proclaiming him to be on sale, and inviting

bidders to offer for him. On no offer being made, he was taken to another place, and again exposed to the scorn of the thousand natives assembled, and only saved, as is intended to appear to the natives, by his countrymen redeeming him at the price (thirty dollars) of a Malagasy slave!

"Now I should greatly like to know whether her majesty Ranavalona avows this act of her officers; and if she does (of which I make no doubt), whether Sir William Gomm will tacitly recognise her right to make slaves of Englishmen? for during the time occupied in this Tamatave farce, Captain Heppick was, to all intents and purposes, a slave; and if Sir William Gomm does acknowledge such a right, whether Lord Stanley and the Right Honourable the Secretary for Foreign Affairs will? and if they also do, whether the people of England will? Can you, Mr. Editor, reply to these queries? because it seems highly necessary that British subjects should know, before trusting themselves in Madagascar, what protection for life and liberty international laws afford them. If such events are to pass over in 'expressive silence,' I think we may inscribe

on the proud flag of England at Mauritius, '*Les pauvres Anglais!*—the pitiable English!'

"Your's, &c.

(Signed) "A BRITON.

"*Port Louis*, 19*th August*, 1844."

About the same time his excellency Sir William Gomm received a memorial upon the subject of the foregoing letter from the party whom it most immediately concerned.

"The Memorial of JACOB HEPPICK, Mariner.

"To His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir WILLIAM MAYNARD GOMM, K.C.B., &c.&c., Governor of Mauritius and Dependencies.

"May it please your Excellency,

"Your memorialist begs to inform your excellency, that he sailed from Port Louis for Tamatave, Madagascar, as chief officer of the bark Maria Laure, of Port Louis, Captain Croft, on the 10th of February last; and that on the 3rd of March, having part of the cargo on board, there came on a severe gale, by which the said ship was driven ashore, unshipped, and broke her rudder; and was in

consequence detained for the reparation of the same. On the 4th of March, your memorialist being on shore on duty, he and several of the resident traders were called to the Custom-house, when the authorities of Tamatave brought forward a Malagasy labourer, who accused your memorialist with having detained him and six other men on board the bark Marie Laure, by force which your memorialist declared to be false, and called upon them to produce proof that the men were seen on board the said ship, which they could not do: yet they detained him on shore that day and night, in charge of four armed men. On the 5th and 6th days of March, your memorialist was conveyed to the Custom-house, when the same charge was made against him in presence of several of the resident traders on each occasion, without any evidence being produced. Notwithstanding, he was still detained on shore. On the 7th of March, the authorities having summoned all the resident traders of the port to a kabary at the government-house, the said charge was repeated; but without any evidence whatever of the men having been seen on board, or leaving

the said ship, notwithstanding a number of men and women from the shore daily visited the ship, and had access to all parts thereof. The Hova authorities, still persisting in the charge, your memorialist was advised by the ship's agent to propose a decision according to their law, in cases of doubt, preferring to pay a small sum, should the decision be against him, rather than that he or the ship should be detained or subjected to annoyance for the future. But the authorities, without having made a decision according to their law, or having produced any evidence in confirmation of the charge, did, on the 25th of March, whilst your memorialist was proceeding to take the rudder on board the ship, detain him forcibly on shore, and informed him that he could not proceed in the ship.

"Your memorialist begs to state, that from that period up to the present date he has been detained a prisoner at Tamatave, under strict charge, night and day, without any further proceedings having been adopted, or any evidence produced in confirmation of the charge made against him, notwithstanding the efforts made by Captain Laconfourgue, when at Tamatave,

in April last, and the frequent demands made by your memorialist, who apprised the authorities that, as they did not comply with his proposal before the departure of the ship, neither would he now consent to a decision by the ordeal; demanding of them either to prove their charge, or to give him his release and compensation for the loss of his time and expenses. But hitherto he has not been favoured with any communication whatsoever; nor has he any prospect of obtaining his release from confinement in an unhealthy climate, or compensation for the loss he will sustain through the unjustifiable proceedings of the authorities of Tamatave, sanctioned by the Hova government. Your memorialist begs to enclose to your excellency a certificate from the only British resident of Tamatave present at the kabary, in confirmation of his statement.

"Your memorialist humbly begs your excellency will be pleased to take into consideration the hardship and injustice of his case; and solicits your excellency will adopt measures to obtain his release, and compensation for his loss, which cannot be estimated at less than twenty pounds sterling per month,

and four shillings per day expenses, from the 25th of March until the time of his release. And your memorialist, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(Signed) JACOB HEPPICK.

"*Tamatave, 16th June,* 1844."

This petition (of which we have now afforded the reader a literal copy) was accompanied by a written voucher from Mr. Samuel Shipton, then residing as a trader at Tamatave, and of whom the petition makes mention as the only Englishman present during the conference at government-house. This document being nothing more than a concise statement in corroboration of Mr. Heppick's petition, we shall not take up the time of the reader by transcribing it.

At the period of Mr. Heppick's appeal to the governor of the Mauritius, the authorities at Tamatave do not appear to have proceeded to the extremities against him with which they were charged in the letter of "A Briton," of which we have offered a copy. That letter, however, was indited as late as the 19th August, whilst Mr. Heppick's petition bore a date

of nearly two months earlier, and the occurrence of his detention took its rise, as we have seen, in the beginning of March. It was during this interim, as was afterwards proved by the queen's own admission, that he was reduced to a state of slavery, and sold for the "goodly price" of "thirty pieces of silver," *videlicet*, in the form of Spanish dollars!

In consequence of this memorial, and of minute inquiries instituted by Mr. Dick, the colonial secretary, amongst parties engaged in the bullock-trade carried on between Madagascar and Mauritius, her majesty's ship Conway, of twenty-six guns, commanded by Captain Kelly, which happened to be in the harbour of Port Louis at the time, was despatched immediately to Madagascar, with instructions to call upon the authorities for an explanation of the particular circumstances whereby they had felt authorised to inflict such a sentence on a British subject. Captain Kelly was also the bearer of a letter to the queen herself, which he was instructed to forward, through some trustworthy channel, to Tananarivo.

The governor availed himself on the occa-

sion of the valuable services of Mr. Baker, of whom we have had occasion already to speak as one of the missionary body formerly resident at Tananarivo, and who, in company with Mr. Johns, remained in the capital until as late as August 1836. Mr. Baker, on quitting Madagascar, did not return with the other members of the mission to Europe; but, fixing his residence at Port-Louis, in Mauritius, had settled there with his family, and never ceased to keep his eye steadfastly fastened on the interests and the sufferings of his poor Malagasy neighbours. To a large number of these, who had found their way into the colony and were engaged in different occupations for their support, he had been, subsequent to his departure from Tananarivo, the medium of conveying religious instruction; in the prosecution of which excellent object his best energies, his purse, and much of his time, were employed.*

* It is believed that there are not fewer than 10,000 of the natives of Madagascar living in Mauritius, most of whom were either originally imported as slaves or brought there by ships as "prize negroes," or are the descendants of such. They now form a valuable and important class of

About the same period, his excellency, Sir William Gomm, despatched her majesty's ship Conway to Madagascar, with instructions, as Mr. Heppick had now been redeemed by certain of the resident traders, to institute inquiries into the circumstances of his imprisonment and subsequent scandalous treatment.

Upon anchoring in the roads of Tamatave, Captain Kelly lost no time in executing the important object of his mission; for which purpose he landed, in company with Mr. Edward Baker, as interpreter of the occasion, and with three of his officers.

A guard of honour* was drawn up at the

free labourers on the island. Many of them came daily to visit our Christian refugees, and expressed the kindliest feelings towards them."—*Narrative of Persecutions, &c.* p. 276.

In a recent number of a Mauritius newspaper it is asserted, upon good authority, that there are not less than 20,000 people of Malagasse origin in that colony; but we are inclined to think the estimate is exaggerated. The number of people from that country who have settled in Mauritius, and who, during their own life-time, were residing in Madagascar, may be computed at somewhere about 1000. Great numbers within the last three years have returned to their native country.

* This "guard of honour" consisted of a single line of Hova soldiers, exemplifying in their dress and accoutre-

government-house to receive Captain Kelly; and thus far the authorities adhered to the international etiquette of more civilised countries, and evinced, as was believed, their desire to comport themselves with dignity and with respect towards the flag of Great Britain. *

ments the poet's asseveration, that "man wants but little here below;" for, with the exception of a girdle round the loins, they were literally naked. The greater portion of them were armed with the musket, in which case the body was in a manner covered with the belt for the cartouch-box, and the shoulders with the knapsack. Others, in lieu of the musket, were furnished with two spears of great length and strength; one of which is designed to be thrown, the other to be retained for the death-struggle, or last rush. Their hair was cut short, the body destitute of ornament, and their general appearance indicated an approach to discipline and order.

The dresses of the present queen's army are by some stated to be relics from those supplied to Radama by the English government, as according to an article in our treaty with that sovereign. But we have good reason to believe that the officers figure, to a considerable extent, in the cast-off garments of the French and English soldiery of Bourbon and Mauritius, for we chance to have been present at the purchase of epaulettes, cocked hats, and the like, at the latter, effected by the masters of the bullock-ships trading between Tamatave and Port Louis, avowedly with a view to their sale at Madagascar!

* We cannot resist acquainting the reader with a ludicrous illustration of the advances which the Hova army

The captain of the Conway at once demanded an interview with the commandant of Tamatave and the chief judge of the same; but the former was denied to him upon the plea of sickness, and the latter, with a number of Hovas, represented themselves as commissioned by Razakafidy (the said commandant) to receive him.*

have effected in the European science of "soldiering." Upon Captain Kelly's approaching the guard of honour, the officer in command vociferated, in broken English, "Rear rank take open order!" We have remarked in the text that the guard consisted but of a single line! Some other equally laughable words of command were issued in English, which the very organisation of the force rendered it incapable of obeying, had the same commands been even understood! This system of manœuvring might be likened to the tactics of the Romish Church, one admirable manœuvre of which is the inculcation of their blasphemous mummery through a language which is about as intelligible to four-fifths of its disciples as though their pastors were to address them in Cherokee.

* Before the commencement of any proceedings, Captain Kelly was requested by the dignitaries assembled in the opposite interest to inform them of the number of his rank! In Madagascar, twelve gradations of honour are recognised, A grand marshal occupying the twelfth and highest, and a private soldier being an instance of the first or lowest. And it was evident, that, had Captain Kelly represented himself as belonging to any number lower than

Upon inquiry being made of the party as to who was to be looked upon as the chief and responsible Malagasy present, it was intimated that Rainihova was appointed as the representative of the commandant.

Captain Kelly then proceeded to state, for the information of the party assembled, that he was deputed by the governor of Mauritius to require information as to the character of

twelve, he would have been confronted with men of more national importance than himself.

We have understood that the gallant officer, not sufficiently alive to the cunning of these sable diplomatists, was unlucky enough to answer, artlessly, that he belonged to the eleventh rank. But Mr. Baker, equally conversant with the constitutional dishonesty of the people as with their object on the present occasion, bethought him of a happy alternative; and, as the only individual amongst the English who could make himself intelligible to the authorities, he replied to the query, "that the rank of Captain Kelly corresponded to the number of guns which his vessel mounted, and that that number being twenty-six, the rank of the English officer exceeded any thing for which their country was prepared!" They had not another word to say upon the point! Much credit is due to Mr. Baker for the readiness and ingenuity with which he thus met their subtlety—for had he allowed Captain Kelly to commit himself under this head, nothing is more certain than that they would have profited by it to embarrass the proceedings.

Mr. Heppick's offence, together with the nature of the sentence which had been passed upon him: apprising the authorities, at the same time, that his excellency had no desire to encourage Englishmen in a breach of the laws of Madagascar, or to protect them when so committing themselves.

The chief judge, "Filibert," replied to this query, that the vessel in question had come to Tamatave, bringing along with her seven labourers, natives of Madagascar, who were returning thereto after the expiration of their engagements at Mauritius. That Captain Croft (who commanded the Marie Laure), together with Mr. Heppick his mate, instead of landing the men on his arrival, took upon themselves to confine them below, and to detain them in his ship. And that, when the searchers went on board to inquire if any labourers had returned to their native country, they were assured by the master and Mr. Heppick that there were not any such in the ship; notwithstanding that there were seven at the moment under the hatches!

That in confirmation of this assertion, two witnesses had been examined by them; also

that there were two other Malagasy natives who had subsequently gone on board whilst she was at Tamatave, for the purpose of procuring a passage to Madagascar; and that these likewise were admitted and concealed below in company with the seven other men; that a gale of wind springing up, and the vessel being found to have broken from her moorings, the nine Malagasys were ordered upon deck to assist in managing her. But that being alarmed for their safety, they had jumped overboard with a view to reaching the shore, and that, in this attempt, one of their number had found a watery grave. Two were made prisoners of by the soldiers on duty in the town, and the remaining six escaped. The two men captured on the occasion had asserted that the captain had concealed them below, and these men it was that were ready to confirm all that he had now advanced against the officers of the Marie Laure.

These two witnesses, however, were not forthcoming upon the demand of Captain Kelly for their appearance. This was nothing more than might have been looked for from a people of such national duplicity of character. Cir-

cumstances had intervened to render their appearance unattainable, so that the *ipse dixit* of the accuser must be supposed to be decisive as to the guilt of the accused. The same parties accused the captain of the Marie Laure of forcibly detaining the nine Malagasy natives on board the ship.

The authorities went on to state that the mate, Mr. Heppick, was, in consequence of these charges, detained at Tamatave, but that the captain of the vessel was allowed to proceed with the cargo to its destination, the presence of the former being required on the spot until the trial should have ended. That that trial then returned a verdict of guilty against them both, and adjudged Mr. Heppick to pay a fine of a hundred dollars; that upon the said fine having been reduced to sixty dollars, and liquidated, Mr. Heppick was freed, and quitted Tamatave.* These representatives of the majesty of Madagascar denied that they had incarcerated Mr. Heppick, but had sub-

* It has been already stated at page 87, that Mr. Heppick was fined thirty dollars only. The reader must, therefore, understand this sum to embrace the conjoint fine levied upon Messrs. Croft and Heppick.

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jected him to the surveillance of a guard, in consequence of his refusal to pay the fine awarded.

It was then particularly inquired on the part of Captain Kelly, if there was any truth in the statement, that the British subject in question had been reduced to slavery in compliance with the laws of Madagascar? They replied that he had not been so treated, and had suffered no other sentence than that of being adjudged to pay the fine. In answer to another question from Captain Kelly, as to whether Mr. Heppick had not undergone a second judgment from the queen herself, subsequent to that first pronounced upon him at Tamatave, a shuffling refusal to speak upon that particular point was all he could elicit, whilst they took shelter behind the jesuitical stronghold that they had followed in the present instance, as well as in all others,—the customs and laws of the country. Again they denied that they had reduced him to slavery; but declined any satisfaction as to the acts of their royal mistress.

Captain Kelly next demanded to know how it came about, if Mr. Heppick had not

been sold as a slave, that the European traders of Tamatave had redeemed him for thirty dollars,—a fact which was well known to be incontrovertible. To this they replied, nothing disconcerted, that the sum of money paid for him by the European traders was nothing more or less than the amount of the fine which he had incurred by transgressing the law of the country.

Captain Kelly: "Was it not publicly proclaimed in two distinct places, that the white men, namely Croft and Heppick, had been reduced into slavery?"

"No such proclamation," they replied, "was ever issued in the case of the white men."

Captain Kelly demanded to know if they were aware of the existence of a treaty of friendship between Radama and the English, by the terms of which it was agreed that no British subject could be reduced to a state of slavery in Madagascar?

The authorities did not deny their knowledge of such an international compact, and remarked that they had no desire to injure Englishmen, whilst they asserted that the ori-

ginal friendship contracted by Radama was still in force towards them. At the same time they maintained that the laws must be respected by foreigners as well as natives, and enforced against all alike.

Such then being asserted to be an exact statement of the steps to which the authorities had resorted in the case of Mr. Heppick, Captain Kelly proposed that they should publicly declare in a kabary that he (Mr. Heppick) had not been, and that no Englishman could be, reduced to slavery in the island of Madagascar, as far as it was tributary to the power of Ranavalona. Hereupon a long discussion ensued. For such a proposition as this they were, without doubt, wholly unprepared; and finding that they could not turn their English visitors from the particular scent in question, they had no other course open to them than that of declining to comply with it. A contrary line of policy would, in all probability, have been rewarded with the loss of their heads.

It was then explained to the native officers present, that, whether true or otherwise, a report had made its way to Mauritius, to the

effect that Mr. Heppick actually had been sold into slavery at Tamatave, and that as this communication had originated with a party or parties actually resident at the latter place, it became a matter of palpable necessity that it should be publicly denied at the same.

And, finally, Mr. Baker remarked to them, on the part of Captain Kelly, that they were, no doubt, aware that the British government had paid an enormous sum of money in order to put a stop to the continuance of slavery in the English colonies; and that a very little reflection might therefore convince them that England would not permit the authorities of Madagascar to sell into slavery her free-born subjects; and, more particularly, that she could not hesitate to resent such an injury, inasmuch as Madagascar had bound herself by the ties of honour as well as of friendship, that the liberties, no less than the lives of Englishmen, should be protected.

Hereupon it was agreed by both parties, that the matter should be referred to the governor of Tamatave (Razakafidy); and that that functionary should pronounce a final decision the next day, at a meeting to be held

between himself and Captain Kelly. But that conference led to no result; and it being evident that nothing was to be gained by a further delay at Tamatave, the Conway weighed anchor and hastened to return to Mauritius.*

Time rolled on, when a letter was received by his excellency, Sir William Gomm, in the month (we believe) of December, from the queen of Madagascar, which purported to be an acknowledgement of that conveyed to her by Captain Kelly on the occasion of his late visit to Tamatave.

We have elsewhere remarked that it was enacted in the lifetime of Radama, and in order to carry out with the more certainty and effect the entire principle of the treaty which he

* At the close of the first day's conference, Captain Kelly was met, on his return to his boat, by a deputation from the authorities, requesting his acceptance of a bullock, &c. in token of the friendly relationship subsisting between himself and the queen's representatives at Tamatave. This, however, he declined to receive at the present stage of the proceedings; which, as it indicated any thing but a pacific feeling in their own eyes, was the cause of evident concern to them.

Captain Kelly, however, consented to accept the present at the final close of the deliberations.

had contracted with us for the suppression of the slave-trade, that any individual hereafter committing a breach of the new law, in connexion with that treaty, should forfeit his life for the same.

The queen, now driven, in some measure, into a corner (as concerns her reputation for consistency and integrity of character), makes a demonstration of her attachment to justice in the outset of her letter, which, although based upon a direct falsehood, evinces nevertheless much cunning and ingenuity. After prefacing her letter with the intimation that "we do not transport slaves across the sea," she retaliates upon ourselves, and declares that it is the English who seek to instruct her people in the traffic of man-stealing; for that Messrs. Heppick and Croft had been guilty of concealing her people on board their vessel, with a view to transporting them across the sea, and carrying them into slavery—which act "did cause them to be lost," or reduced to slavery! The felicity of this stratagem is not the less complete, that it is true Radama did decree a law to the effect that any foreigner detected in exporting slaves (in the face of the

treaty which he had contracted with England), should himself be reduced to slavery in Madagascar!* So that her majesty turned the fact to account by seeking to excuse herself upon the broad principle of justice, and in virtue of the respect with which she is imbued for the literal observance of those laws enacted by her predecessor for the discouragement of slavery without.

At the close of her letter her majesty emphatically denies (what the wording of the treaty expressly declares, viz.) that any agreement was conceded by Radama, to the effect that Englishmen should not be brought to judgment by the laws of Madagascar; which is only another of the innumerable falsehoods which Ranavalona is in the habit of investing with all the sanctity of the queenly dictum.

In connexion with that part of the epistle which intimates her determination to follow her own humour in her own country, however little we may respect the policy which dictates such a line of action in the present instance,

* In the Government Gazette of Mauritius for March 1821, a notice of this decree of Radama's may still be seen by those curious in the matter.

we must, at least, admire the independence by which it is characterised; although we are not certain that it will be appreciated in Downing Street in such a spirit as shall be satisfactory to her majesty!

CHAPTER V.

Insult to European Traders in Madagascar—Their Banishment Decreed—Account of the Tangena Ordeal—Arrival of the Conway and the Zelée in the Roads of Tamatave—Conference with the Hovas—Unsuccessful close of the Discussion—Hostile Conduct of the Hova Officers—Their Insolence to the French—Protest of the English and French Commanders—Refusal of the Hovas to receive the Protest—Hostilities commenced—Storming of the Fortress—Barbarity of the Hovas—Tamatave reduced to Ashes—Good Feeling between the English and French—Departure of the European Residents.

About the month of May, 1845 (that is, six months after the Conway's return from Madagascar), an address was received by the governor of Mauritius from the united English traders resident at Tamatave, embodying the details of a new grievance which had just been put upon them, in common with the rest of the Europeans inhabiting that locale. The wrong which they complained of was

nothing less than that of a sudden order conveyed to them from the queen to quit Madagascar, with their families and effects, within a fortnight from that period; and to dissolve their connexion altogether with the island.

It is worthy of remark, in connexion with the European traders of Tamatave, that those amongst them not *bonâ fide* Englishmen, appear to be much less the objects of our compassion, upon a review of the losses and inconveniencies to which they have since been subjected, than *à priori* might be supposed; and that Fortune had, in some measure retaliated upon them for the want of integrity which they had manifested in the late transaction affecting Mr. Heppick. What we allude to is this. Had the traders (and they were principally Frenchmen, or men of French extraction, who released him) refrained from ransoming Mr. Heppick, the authorities would have proceeded to extremities with that gentleman, and have sold him, in reality, into slavery! Such an act, the traders were aware, must have brought Great Britain down upon them with all her might; and the interests of France, peradventure, would have permanently

suffered in the crisis! With the design, therefore, of rescuing him from the prospect of becoming the agent to put such an engine into motion, and in the hope of seeing the matter hushed up in the end, they stepped forward in an interest, which had the additional merit of being invested with an ostensible aspect of benevolence! *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.*

As this last act of Ranavalona's was one which admitted of no delay on the part of those to whom the traders appealed for protection, his excellency again despatched Captain Kelly with the Conway to their relief. And as a similar petition had been transmitted to the governor of Bourbon by the French settlers of Tamatave, it appeared probable that that ship might already have been preceded by a squadron from the neighbouring isle.

The services of Mr. Baker were again put in requisition for the occasion, and he accompanied Captain Kelly as interpreter to the expedition.

We should have explained above, that the European traders were not unconditionally reduced to the alternative of quitting Mada-

gascar; for the *benevolent* government of that country had proposed to them the desirableness of their remaining in the island on a footing with the native inhabitants,—submitting themselves, unreservedly, to the arbitrary laws and unconstitutional practices of the Hovas; as well as consenting to observe the feudal institutions, and to have their properties and persons brought, as occasion might suggest, within the jurisdiction of the idols; and their innocence or guilt, on occasions of their supposed infringement of the laws, decided (at the risk of their lives) by the Tangena ordeal.*

* We shall avail ourselves of the present mention of this Malagasy form of trial by ordeal to offer a brief notice of that most disgusting, filthy, and preposterous of all the trials by ordeal ever devised by the misguided wit of man. The unfortunate victim of a malicious and unproved accusation is suddenly seized on by ruffians, employed for this purpose by the government, and, after being invited to gorge as much rice as may be expected to shield the coats of the stomach from the poison to which it is about to be subjected, he is compelled to swallow three pieces of the skin of a chicken, rolled up in the form of pills, and immediately thereupon a dose also of the poisonous kernel of the tangena (palm-tree) fruit, mixed up with the juice of the banana-tree. A curse is then invoked upon his head by the "head-curser," or administrator, in the event of

In a word, they were offered permission to remain, on the strict understanding that they were to consider themselves subjects of Ranavalona, and as such, circumstanced precisely with her native people, who did fealty, not as a free nation, but as vassals of the soil, whom she had conquered and reduced.

"The inducements to the traders to sub-

his guilt, and a verdict of acquittal, should the ordeal proclaim him innocent. He is next obliged to drink warm water, sufficient to provoke vomiting; and upon the ejection of the contents of the stomach a verdict of innocence is announced, should the three pieces of skin previously swallowed be found amongst them! But should they not be discovered, the victim of this double death is strangled upon the spot, unless, as often occurs, he falls a victim to the virulence of the poison.

This very benevolent mode of inquiry for the discovery of truth reminds us strongly of an ingenious institution, which adorned the legal code of our own country in the time of King James I.; the Malagasy expedient, however, possessing the superiority over the other, of allowing the possibility of a loop-hole out of which the accused might, in some instances, escape. *Là voilà:*—

"There is a famous way of trying witches, recommended by King James I. The old woman is tied hand and foot, and thrown into the river; and if she swims, she is guilty, and taken out and burnt; but, if she is innocent, she sinks, and is *only* drowned!"—GOLDSMITH'S *Miscellaneous Works.*

mit were extremely urgent. They had, many of them, grown grey in Madagascar, some having resided there about forty years; and some having properties enabling them to live in ease and comfort. Others had foreign commissions to execute and affairs to close, the non-completion of which would involve them in bankruptcy and ruin. Many had families, who were now seized by the Hovas and conveyed inland to await the decision of their fathers and husbands. All were tied to Tamatave as the place of their livelihood and worldly prospects, to conquer a footing in which they had sacrificed every chance of advancement elsewhere, and, in nine cases out of ten, bodily health and vigour. Every method of terror that could be devised by the Hovas was put in practice to extort their submission. They were assembled repeatedly at the Custom-house shed, refused permission to go to their dwellings until they promised to acquiesce, and assured that the rent the queen would demand in the event of their submission should only be ten dollars for each of their houses per annum; and they were but imperfectly in-

formed of the degradations that would await them as Hova subjects."

"Two Creoles of Mauritius, two Frenchmen, and one Spaniard surrendered their birthright to their fears, and gave in their oath of fealty, which has probably now involved four of them in the treasonable act of carrying arms against their respective countries. The rest, amounting to thirty or forty, appealed to the governments of Mauritius and Bourbon to protect them against violence and wrong."

The above extract is taken from an article given to the Mauritius public (on the return of the Conway from Madagascar), by the best authority from which the intelligence contained in it could have proceeded, namely, from Mr. Baker, who accompanied the expedition; who was, of course, present at every conference which ensued between the opposite parties; and who was the immediate channel of communication, not only between the English and the Hovas, but between the latter also and the French — for no interpreter accompanied the force from Bourbon: indeed,

we are not aware of any other individual, either Creole or European, who possesses a familiar intimacy with the language of Madagascar in either of the sister colonies.*

On the Conway's arrival in the roads of Tamatave, on the 12th of June, 1845, it was discovered that a French man-of-war had preceded her. The Zélée, of 12 guns, had anchored there the day before. At nightfall, a French commodore made his appearance in the Berceau frigate, of 26 guns. The commander of the Zélée had waited upon Captain Kelly, on the latter's arrival in the roadstead, communicating to him the fact of his having been engaged that day on shore in a conference with the authorities of the place, from

* We perceive by a Mauritius newspaper, that Mr. Baker has just brought out a grammar of the Malagasy language. This work appears to us to comprise a condensed view of the Hova language of Madagascar; exceedingly interesting to the philologist, and the possession of which must form a necessary text-book to, and greatly facilitate, the student's acquisition of the language. Should England open a "fresh account" with Madagascar upon a more solid and advantageous footing than heretofore, it cannot but become the interest of many to acquaint themselves with, at least, the rudiments of this tongue.

whom he was unable to obtain the smallest concession in favour of the Europeans. They resolutely adhered to their former determination to oblige them to quit within the period assigned for their departure.

At two o'clock on the 13th of June, "Captain Kelly sent letters on shore, desiring an interview with the commandant, chief judge, and officers, as soon as convenient. Ten o'clock the next morning having been appointed, he went on shore, accompanied by three officers and Mr. Baker as interpreter. It was a pitiable sight to see all the traders huddled together at the Custom-house building, surrounded by merchandise and luggage, packed apparently in extreme hurry and confusion, and their looks and dress plainly expressing the equal agitation of their minds. Nor was it much less discouraging to be met at the landing-place by a body of Hova soldiers, armed with muskets and spears, to prevent our landing, as if we had been a nation at open war with them instead of the old and tried friend of Madagascar.

"Captain Kelly, however, seemed determined to endure all without retaliation, and

spare no possible efforts to bring them to reason and moderation. Seated at the house of the grand judge, in the midst of a multitude of Hovas of all ranks, he held with the governor, chief judge, and officers, an animated discussion, lasting nearly three hours.

"It would be tedious to give the details and endless repetitions (on the part of the Hovas) of this conference. They had no criminal charges to bring against the British traders, but were resolved to carry out the recent law subjecting them to Malagasse vassalage, or to banishment. In vain it was pleaded that time was not allowed to the merchants to wind up their affairs; that no vessels had arrived to convey them and their effects away; only the Manchester, from Mauritius, and a small trading bark from Bourbon, lying then at anchor in the roads of Tamatave. Where and how were they to go? and what to do if the vessels would not take them? The Hova officers 'did not know;' but 'the law of the land must be obeyed, and the time allowed would expire the next day.'

"To every argument and petition for delay they opposed an obstinate negative.

"Captain Kelly, therefore, now demanded that before the traders were forcibly expelled, a sealed letter from the governor of Mauritius which he had delivered, and one from himself to the queen, asking for one year to be granted to the merchants holding property at Tamatave, might be forwarded to her majesty at Tananarivo, and the question left entirely to her decision. He pleaded the ancient friendship of the British and Hova governments; offered to be responsible for the peaceable conduct of the traders in the interim; and promised that they should be ordered to abide by the queen's decision. The Hova officers seemed divided in opinion, but finally rejected the proposal. Thus, all reference to higher authority was rendered impracticable by the obstinacy of the Hova officers, and both parties were left to act on their own responsibility.

"There appeared nothing remaining but to ascertain whether British subjects who absolutely could not leave within the prescribed period would be protected in life and property, in accordance with ancient treaties and the customs of friendly nations. The Hova officers distinctly and repeatedly declared they

would not promise any security to the property of the white people leaving; they would not admit that they had any property in Madagascar; neither would they be responsible for the lives of those who stayed contrary to the law. In short, they would give no assurance or promise whatever. They insisted upon the traders leaving or submitting, but they would not allow the sailors of the Conway to assist in fetching away goods from the traders' houses. Here, therefore, the discussion closed; Captain Kelly solemnly declaring, that he could not but regard their conduct as hostile to the British nation, which they replied to with marked insolence and defiance. It appeared obvious that certain of the Hova officers, thinking themselves unassailable in their fortress, wished for an opportunity of shewing their strength.

"Captain Kelly returned on board. The Hova officers immediately withdrew into their 'batterie,' or fort; and when the French commodore sent two officers on shore to convey letters and receive their answers, they absolutely refused them an interview, or even permission to land.

"Saturday was occupied in assisting the traders with boats to embark their goods; and two other trading vessels luckily came to anchor.

"On Sunday morning a joint protest of the English and French commanders against these outrageous proceedings having been drawn up in English, French, and Malagasse, was taken on shore by an English and a French officer, accompanied as usual by the interpreter; but the Hovas refusing to send an officer to receive it, the boat returned bearing back the protest. Captain Kelly, still resolved to afford them every chance of conciliation, went himself on shore, accompanied by the same French officer, when the Hovas yielded so far as to send an officer of rank to receive the protest, promising to reply to it, if at all, by two o'clock.

"Thus, all having been done that the joint commanders could devise for bringing the authorities to reason and justice, it appeared unavoidably to follow, that if they still persisted in refusing to allow the traders a reasonable time to embark their merchandise and luggage, (on which condition it was

his great desire to *fête* the officers with a ball, and to offer some sort of entertainment to the men of the frigate; but as Captain Kelly's orders to return admitted of no delay, he was under the necessity of departing before the necessary arrangements for such an end could be accomplished. Under these circumstances the gallant captain (together, we believe, with his officers) was invited to dine with the governor. An elegant banquet was provided for them, at which one lady alone, Madame Bazoche, was present. No sooner were the guests assembled in their several places at the table, than his excellency arose, and requesting all the French present to do the same, he filled his wine-glass with Madeira, and proposed, as a toast, the health of the Queen of England, which was cheered with the greatest enthusiasm by all his countrymen at the table. The party then sat down, and the entertainment commenced.

CHAPTER VII.

Dependence of Mauritius upon Trade with Madagascar — Rise in the Price of Provisions in Mauritius — Sufferings of the Malagasse Nation — Claims on the Attention of the British Legislature — Queen Ranavalona's sanguinary Persecutions — Decrease of Population at Tamatave and Foule-Pointe — Examination of the French Claim to Madagascar — Retrospective History of the Conquest of the Island — Hatred of the Natives towards the French — Abandonment of the French Settlement of Benyowsky.

SCARCELY had this termination to our friendly relations with Madagascar been formally announced in Mauritius, when the vast importance of the former island to the necessities of the latter began almost immediately to be sensibly felt. We have already informed our readers that the colony in question is (we might say with truth) entirely supplied with horned cattle from Madagascar, whilst large supplies of rice, together with poultry, are annually drawn from the same

quarter to meet the consumption in demand at Mauritius. No sooner, therefore, had that country become closed against us, than those engaged in the importation of bullocks in Mauritius, perceiving how great a run would necessarily be made upon the small stock of beef existing in the colony, proceeded to avail themselves of the advantage which accident had placed in their hands, and to raise the price of that article of consumption from ninepence per pound (which may be taken, perhaps, as the average price of prime beef), to eighteen, twenty pence, and upwards. As this particular kind of meat in the markets of Mauritius is that at all times the most economical, and to a very large majority of the people the only one really attainable, the pressure which so great a rise in its price has lain the bulk of society under may easily be conceived. We are now speaking of the inconvenience as it exists in its infancy merely, and as it was felt in our colony of Mauritius, almost synchronously with the first interruption to our intercourse with Madagascar. From this it is not difficult to foresee how greatly the evil must increase in its ruinous conse-

quences upon the many, unless some expedient should be speedily devised for opening a fresh mart of supply. In the article of price, too, the total withdrawal of those supplies hitherto derived from Madagascar was speedily followed by a considerable rise in the price of the Indian grain, whilst every article of consumption has felt the impulse thus given to the two or three under our notice, and the necessaries of life have become, as a direct consequence, proportionately raised in their value.

The details with which we have presented the reader, in connexion with the past and present sufferings of that large portion of the Malagasse nation over which Ranavalona has thrown the mantle of her protection, invite his attention earnestly to the fact, that ever since that female Nero ascended the throne, the existence of this unhappy people has literally been nothing less than one long and uninterrupted groan! Were it possible that the stage of these operations could be transplanted to our own hemisphere, and that its consequent propinquity to our own hearths enabled our newspapers to furnish a constant

and regular detail of them to the English public, we have too good an opinion of the natural goodness of amiable John Bull's affections to feel a doubt but that petitions would be poured in by him upon the House of Commons, until the very table groaned under their number! Nor do we believe that her majesty's advisers would, in such case, be backward to enlist themselves in the interests of a people subject to the worst forms of cruelty at the whim of a tyrannical despot! The country would look for such a display of humanity at their hands, if it did not even claim a natural right to exact it from them. Is the quality, then, of the Malagasses' sufferings of a more endurable description? and is Ranavalona's ferocity less detestable, because the Equator lies between the territory upon which they are displayed and our own shores? By what subtlety of argument, by what refinement of state policy, can we pretend to tax this country for the support of an expensive establishment to check a lawless system of cruelty, carried on in the shape of slave-dealing, and yet look coolly on at the perpetration of enormities, in no whit less revolting,

and scarcely conducted on a scale less extensive? Perhaps it will be contended, that in the one instance the injustice is perpetrated by strangers to the soil of the oppressed, whilst in the other we recognise nothing more than the exercise of a sovereign's own jurisdiction upon its people! We admit the validity of such a distinction in a political sense;—but, regarding the question in the wider one of humanity, we must declare it to be, in good truth, a distinction without a difference, and one which ought not, in our opinion, to be recognised where the opposing interests are such as reflect, by their very existence, a scandal upon human nature. It will not be assumed, we trust, from the foregoing remark, that we are raising our voice against the gigantic efforts which our country is making for the suppression of man-stealing; and in the steady continuance of which she is laying the foundation of a species of glory, which will long outlast, we believe, the duration of that more tinsel reputation derivable from less disinterested successes.* But that

* It is not a little remarkable, that the early Mosaic interdict against man-stealing (which, be it remembered,

which we do mean to be understood as advancing, is, that it is unworthy of a nation like England to apply such a balm to her conscience as that of exerting herself, even to this extent, for the overthrow of cruelty in one shape, and yet of betaking herself to the opiate of political casuistry, as a means of deadening her senses to its continuance in another!

And here, we think, it will not be out of place with such a view of the subject, if we put the reader in possession of one of the most recent instances of the Queen of Madagascar's sanguinary exploits,—that is to say, recent in comparison of any others which have made their way to our knowledge; although it is not to be supposed that the cravings of such an appetite for blood could be long sated by the extent even of the present

was never subsequently repealed with other portions of the old law) has been so entirely disregarded by the most practically religious and virtuous country in Christendom, until within the present century. Can aught be more positive than the words of God himself in condemnation of the traffic?—"He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death."—Exodus, xxi. 16.

sacrifice. Occupying the entire western side of Madagascar, we meet with a race quite distinct in themselves, and between whom and the Hovas there has ever existed a reciprocal hatred. This people are well known to those acquainted with the modern history of Madagascar, under the name of the Sakalava or Sakalave tribe; or as some early writers (Copland, for instance) denominate them, the Seclave tribe. "They are pastoral tribes" (to take our account from the source alluded to), "living on the milk and flesh of their domestic herds, and on the chase of the blue or wild cattle, and wild hogs; on arrow-root, arum, and many other roots and esculents of spontaneous growth. They are an athletic, bold, and hardy race, and numerous compared with any other tribe of common origin in Madagascar; although few, compared with the vast territory they occupy, extending full 900 miles in length, and, on an average, 100 in breadth. In the opinion of the best-informed French authorities they are destined to become, sooner or later, the dominant power in the island.

"The eastern coast, in about three-fourths

of its length, from the north point where the widely spread Sakalaves are found lying westward, to within a few hundred miles of the southern extremity, is occupied by the Betsimisaraka (the inseparable multitude, or united people), the only tribe with which we are acquainted at Mauritius.

"They are an agricultural people, cultivating rice extensively for exportation as well as consumption; notwithstanding which they also, during a part of the year, subsist on bananas, yams, and such spontaneous roots and fruits as the herds of wild hogs, monkeys, squirrels, and lemurs, think proper to leave for the human aborigines. They are an inoffensive and unwarlike people, great part of them having submitted to the Hova government without a blow, about twenty-five years ago; and to this they have proved useful and, indeed, indispensable auxiliaries.

"A large tribe which formerly occupied the north-east shores of Antongil Bay refused to submit, and have been exterminated by devastating wars, selling about 300,000 of them into slavery, and destroying an equal number by outlawry, rewards offered for their

heads, and such other diabolical means as the Hovas could devise.

"At length the Hova government, wasted in its limited resources by the death of its soldiers, is unable to defend the eastern provinces against the more vigorous Sakalavas, who, nevertheless, prior to the Hova dominion, were always kept off by the Betsimisaraka themselves. For about five years past, annual invasions have been carried on by the north-west Sakalavas against the north-east districts of the Betsimisaraka, destroying the Hova fortresses, and carrying off, as booty, the cattle of the Betsimisaraka for food, and their mothers, wives, and children, into slavery. Before last year they had destroyed every fortress of the Hovas, and devastated the whole country from Diego Saurez to Angontsy, excepting the impregnable peninsula of Diego. They have repeatedly declared their intention of not ceasing these invasions till Tamatave, the last port of the Hova queen, is destroyed.

"Last year they invested Angontsy with a large army, when the Hova troops, throwing up the best defence they could, and pointing several cannons at the enemy, shut themselves

up in the village and fortress with their cattle and property. The Sakalavas beat the queen's troops, boldly approached the fortifications, and seized and spiked the cannon. Affairs now went very hard against the Hovas, and they expected to be all cut off. But when they drove out the rich booty of cattle to the assailants, the Sakalava were content with such an acquisition, and took their leave, promising to repeat their visit the following season.

"During this period, the native Betsimisaraka not being allowed to keep fire-arms, with which the Sakalavas were well provided, had fled with their wives and children into the woods, to seek a refuge amongst the serpents and other denizens of the forest. The way being again clear, they now began to creep back into their villages.

"The Hova officers, mortified at their disgraceful defeat and dishonourable capitulation, and fearing the consequences of their queen's anger, determined to cloak their disgrace by wreaking their cowardly fury upon the defenceless Betsimisaraka, the *éclat* of which should serve to eclipse the infamy of

their defeat. They therefore collected as many of the returning villagers as they could at Angontsy, and formally accused them of cowardice and treason for not coming to the help of the queen's troops. Accusations of this nature are soon ended in Madagascar. The wretched people were all seized and handcuffed, including the women and the circumcised boys, comprehending generally all above seven years of age."

The preceding explanatory detail we have deemed necessary, in order both to make the particular circumstances (giving rise to this transaction) intelligible to the reader, as well as that he may be able to form an idea of the sort of motives which are sufficient at the present day in Madagascar to instigate those in authority to the wholesale destruction of life. We now come to the very gist of the matter, which the writer of the preceding narrative informs us he has published in the unadulterated language of the native, who (through an almost miraculous incident) has been preserved to put on record what we are about to transcribe; and who cannot but be looked upon with a degree of additional in-

terest from the "*quorum pars magna fui*" associations which attend him.

"I was amongst the number," says the individual in question, "who were seized and handcuffed. We were all ordered to be slaughtered in a general massacre, beginning with the women and children. I was sitting on the ground by the side of my brother. The soldiers came and cut down and pierced the victims with swords and spears. I saw eighty-nine women slaughtered, and a great number of men; I cannot tell how many. At length it came to our turn. I and my brother stood up, when he being killed with a sword fell dead on the ground, knocking me down in his fall. I lay a few seconds, when a Hova officer pulled me up by the arm to be killed; but, looking at me, said 'This is a good-looking youngster, I will take him for my slave and pay his redemption-money.' Thus I alone was saved from death, and went home to the officer's premises." (The poor fellow's lament reminds one of the language of Job's messengers, on recounting the successive calamities of the patriarch,—"And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.")

"I took an early opportunity of running away, having the fear of death continually before me; and, reaching a near port, I contrived to get on board a ship and escape. After the horrible massacre was completed, the heads of the victims were all cut off and put into canoes, the men's heads being below and the women's and children's above. They completely filled seven large canoes! They were sent coastwise, north and south, to be stuck on poles along the shore. The line of human heads extends as far as from Port Louis to Pamplemousses,* about seven miles. They are now bleached by the sun and rain, and present to the ships which approach the coast of Angontsy the appearance of lumps of chalk or lime, glistening in the rays of the sun as far as the eye can reach!"

The narration of the above tragedy closes at this point of our extract, when the writer

* "Pamplemousses" is the name of a village about seven miles from the town of Port Louis in Mauritius:—the same which receives an interest from its frequent mention in the story of "Paul and Virginia." It was to this spot that their parents resorted for the purposes of religion.

from whom we are now taking our sketch thus concludes his remarks in connexion with it:—

"Such is the unvarnished tale by which the poor fellow lays claim to British protection. It needs no comment, no advocacy; but it seems to call for one remark: that, as the man is here, it would not be difficult for his excellency the governor to institute an inquiry into the exact facts, in order to lay them before the Secretary of State.

"An inquiry of this kind might probably lead to others, and ultimately perhaps to a general investigation into the present state of the eastern provinces of Madagascar (with which we have commercial intercourse), as compared with her former state. Tamatave and Foule-Point have notoriously declined in population from thousands to hundreds. Other places to which vessels used to resort are become absolute deserts. North of Angontsy, comprehending the healthy province of Vohimarina, is said to be so; and Angontsy itself, after the horrible events that have occurred there, may be expected to follow the same fatal course.

"The Betsimisaraka say, 'Unless the English save us we are lost.' But, the British government looks coolly and unconcernedly on: the commerce of one port after another being destroyed, and whole tribes becoming extinct, and not so much as an inquiry instituted, or an official report made to the supreme government, until the whole may be irrevocably lost. Her majesty's frigates come and go, and lie idle, dismasted, their men falling sick in the confined Trou-Fanfaron,* for six months together, whilst *laissez faire* is the permanent order of the day.

"These eighty-nine women thus ruthlessly butchered in cold blood, would have been very useful at Mauritius for making vacoa-bags, mats, hats, and roafia-cloth, which we purchase from Madagascar: the work of their hands whilst they are suffered to live. The presence of a British man-of-war would have

* The "Trou-Fanfaron" is a basin in the harbour of Port Louis, so situated as to offer the best security to vessels during those months significantly denominated at Mauritius the "hurricane months." Our men-of-war are accordingly laid up in that spot during the season in question.

saved their lives, and those of thousands of other equally innocent and useful beings, who have fallen victims to the bloody tyranny of the Hova dynasty."

Such is a picture of one of the most recent rehearsals of Malagasse atrocity, of which distinct information has reached us; but which still, in comparison of many others to which the reader's attention has been called in this essay, may be said to be none of the gravest! and from the frequency with which they were accustomed to be enacted, even at a time when our missionaries might be supposed to have interposed a moral check upon Ranavalona, it is much to be feared that the spear is seldom borne inactive at the present day, when she has manœuvred so successfully as to berid herself of all foreign surveillance. Declamations are often heard against the passive policy of ministers, in hesitating to interpose their authority to put a stop to the scenes of anarchy and bloodshed which are of almost uninterrupted perpetration in the Punjaub, even to the extent of annexing that district to our Anglo-Indian possessions—an alternative

to which some would have us resort on the principle of policy and self-preservation, but which others recommend upon arguments dictated solely by humanity! Yet we hold ourselves entirely aloof from the scene of action now under consideration, on the principle that England has no pretext, still less a legitimate claim, to interpose her arm in behalf of this inconveniently situated people! We shall return a little later to this point in the inquiry, when we do not despair of being able to support the views which we hold, with arguments sufficiently convincing to vindicate the propriety of English interference in the present unnatural state of Madagascar.

The reader is already aware of an attack upon a solitary point of Madagascar having been recently effected by the co-operation of a French and English armament. On this account, any prior title of our own to dictate to that country has become trammelled by the necessity we have now fallen under of working in concert with France, in as far as satisfaction is demanded for the outrage perpetrated upon the subjects of that power in like manner with those of Great Britain. Hence the question of

English interposition has become manifestly complicated by this incident, and we are not without our fears that the interests of the Malagasy will have undergone a serious impairment from the same. For whilst England might have felt disposed to avail herself of the occasion which such conduct on the part of the Hova government has afforded her to remove her present majesty from the throne, for the people's benefit,—or even to have profited in a different way by the opportunity on her own account; it cannot be doubted but that she will be less anxious to take either step, while a second European power enjoys similar pretensions to herself, and that power notoriously actuated by motives of cupidity * in connexion with the particular country before us. Again, it must not be concealed, that our missionaries will be less likely to avail them-

* "Des hommes éminents dans le sein de la chambre, M. Dufaure, l'illustre M. de Lamartine, sont dévoués à l'idée de l'expansion coloniale de la France. Des députés d'opinions diverses, MM. Alphonse Denis, Estancelin, Lherbette, Lacrosse, &c., s'occupent avec un zèle particulier de la question spéciale de Madagascar.

"La politique nécessaire de la France forcera tôt ou

selves of the opening it would, under other circumstances, afford them, to urge upon the British government the desirableness of insisting upon Ranavalona's readmission of agents from their body, when they reflect that France will assuredly profit by the opportunity to insist on similar terms for herself: at least, that howsoever little the government of Louis Philippe may concern itself for that object, the priesthood will not be backward in seizing the occasion.*

And here we think it would be well to devote a little space to the examination of

tard le gouvernement à coloniser Madagascar."—*Colonisation de Madagascar*, par DÉSIRÉ LAVERDANT, p. 111.

And in another part of the above *brochure*, M. Laverdant gives way to his enthusiasm in the cause of plundering Madagascar in a strain of heroic patriotism: "A Malegache! à Malegache!"—P. 159.

* "La Presse," in a recent lugubrious diatribe upon the lowering aspect of the French political horizon in Tahiti, denounces Queen Pomaré as "a docile and simple instrument of the Protestant missionaries;" and urges, furthermore, as an irresistible argument in favour of carrying fire and sword into the heart of her dominions, the fact that, unless France adopt a decisive policy of this sort, Tahiti would be hopelessly falling into the hands of the missionaries!

those pretensions which are set up by our neighbours to a legitimate claim upon Madagascar. The reader has already been furnished with an extract from a proclamation of governor Farquhar (issued shortly after our conquest of Mauritius), in connexion with Madagascar, wherein it is shewn that, prior to our occupation of Mauritius, the French government were in the habit of styling Madagascar a dependency of that colony, as declared in the official Gazettes discovered in their archives after the surrender of the island. He is aware, also, of the bitter chagrin which it caused the French Governor of Bourbon to witness us arming ourselves with that policy which his own country had dictated to us, when we claimed possession of Madagascar as an avowed appendage of the colony to which we had just succeeded by the power of our arms.* Now, on what pre-

* "La paix venue, le gouverneur de l'île Maurice refusa de livrer à l'administration de Bourbon les établissements de la grande terre; il prétextait que, l'île Maurice ayant été cédée avec ses dépendances, le vaste pays de Mallegache devait être considéré comme une dépendance de la petite île, et suivre son sort.

"La Gouvernement de la Restauration réclama avec

text had France considered herself justified in annexing (even though nominally only), the island of Madagascar to her colony of Mauritius? We confess, that in this query we encounter a political enigma which baffles all our ingenuity to solve, even though we seek to unravel it through the medium of her own historians.

We have already remarked, that the Portuguese were the first Europeans who seem to have had any intercourse with Madagascar. It is certain, from the united testimony of all historians, that it was first brought to our knowledge by that then enterprising people. Next in rotation we find the Dutch making it a rendezvous, in their intercourse with India. The former people established themselves in the island, and were ultimately repaid for their curiosity by a general mas-

énergie, et l'Angleterre dut se dessaisir de sa proie. Dès lors, le gouvernement Anglais chercha à atteindre son but par des voies détournées."—*Colonisation de Madagascar*, par DÉSIRÉ LAVERDANT, p. 67.

The above extract conveys a fair idea of the soreness so generally felt amongst French politicians, that we should have acquired by heart the lesson they had taught us in connexion with the dependencies of Mauritius.

sacre, to which the natives of the soil reduced them.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, a patent was granted by the French ministry to a body of individuals, who organised themselves under the title of "The French East India Company," to establish a colony in Madagascar.* That island was accordingly made the object of experiment; and we read that "Pronis," a person invested with the responsibility of a governor, "had received orders to take possession of Madagascar in the king's name, and to form an establishment on a suitable spot, capable of being fortified," &c.† The result of this expedition was, that Antongil Bay on the east coast, and the small island of St. Mary's adjacent thereto, were invested in the name of the king of France; and a spot called Lucia or Monghasia, in the province of Anosy, at the opposite extremity of the island, but still on the eastern coast, was selected as the

* "Ah! la France était une grande nation sous Richelieu et sous Louis XIV."—*Colonisation of Madagascar*, par DÉSIRÉ LAVERDANT, p. 15.

† Ellis's "History of Madagascar," vol. ii.

site of their principal establishment. In the neighbourhood of this spot they soon after erected a fort, which they denominated Fort Dauphin; and the locality of which was not selected without due attention to the consideration of a commanding position. No mention is made by Ellis of the degree of encouragement which was given by the natives to Pronis and his followers, upon their first appearance in the island. At the time we are speaking of, Madagascar seems to have recognised, in some measure, a supreme power of Arab origin, to whom all the petty chiefs were tributary; and who certainly did not concede any right to the French to establish themselves as conquerors on the soil. The French governors transacted their negotiations with the chiefs of villages alone, and not with the supreme authority alluded to; and it is generally asserted by those less interested in this view of the matter, that instead of a conquest, the French adopted a safer policy, and secured a footing by bribing some of the numerous chieftains in the vicinity of Fort Dauphin to sanction their settling on the coast. But,

even could they make good their title to the island by the argument of conquest, we should like to be favoured with an explanation of the grounds upon which they presumed to subject a free and unoffending people to such a condition. In what had the Malagasy nation offended them; and whence the right on the part of France to make a conquest of their country?

After the death of Pronis,* the govern-

* During the very few years that Pronis was left in command of this French settlement, he distinguished himself in the eyes of the natives by a feat to which hitherto they had been strangers; and to his adoption of which his country is probably indebted for the first-fruits of that hatred which has ever since existed towards the French, in the Malagasy breast.

"When Captain Pronis was governor, he treacherously sold a great number of the natives, who had unsuspectingly engaged themselves in the service of the colony, to Vander Meister, the Dutch governor of the Mauritius."—COPLAND'S *History of Madagascar*, p. 37.

Copland tells the above on the authority of Pronis's own countrymen. Ellis, in relating the same story, informs us, that "the unfortunate victims of his reckless cupidity were shipped off in so crowded a state, that the greater part of them died on their passage; and the remaining few, upon arriving at the Mauritius, fled immediately into the woods, where they subsisted ever after-

ment of the so-called French colony was transferred to Monsieur Flacourt, a gentleman who has written extensively on the subject of Madagascar. But Monsieur Flacourt having sought to extend the French dominion in the island by the agencies of fire and sword, was not less happy in the means he adopted to perpetuate the hatred of the Malagasy to French interference with them.* The French establishment, which seems to have been commenced about the year 1642, and which, we again beg to impress upon the reader's mind,

wards in a wild state, eluding all attempts to recapture them."—Vol. ii. p. 10.

Flacourt, in his "Histoire de Madagascar," thus expresses the feelings to which this transaction gave rise amongst the natives:—"Depuis ce jour, aussitôt qu'un navire mouillait sur la rade, toute la côte devenait déserte."

Another, and a very recent French writer on Madagascar, accepts upon trust the villany of Monsieur Pronis in its fullest extent.—Vide *Colonisation de Madagascar*, par DÉSIRÉ LAVERDANT.

He states, that at the first kabary which took place between the immediate successor of Pronis and the native chiefs, the former was assured "que jamais les Malegaches n'oublieraient la vente des hommes libres livrés à Vander Meister."—P. 42.

* "Flacourt était un homme intelligent et ferme, mais ne connaissant rien que la politique du sabre."

was not only not excused by the arguments of conquest, but, in all probability, was only tolerated by the natives from a dread of their invaders' power), after passing through the hands of a succession of different governors, some of whom had committed unheard-of outrages upon the natural proprietors of the soil, was finally relinquished and abandoned somewhere about thirty years after its first formation; the small remnant of the French colonists having reaped a terrible reckoning from the natives, who subjected them, like their predecessors, the Portuguese, to a general massacre.* During a particular epoch of the period in question, it is stated by Ellis, that "the French East India Company, having extended their views, appointed the Mar-

* Lescallier, a Frenchman of apparently superior powers of mind, as well as a man who seems to have been more liberally endowed with the principle of colonial humanity than the worthies of whom we have made mention, and who was sent to Madagascar in 1792, by his government, for the purpose of ascertaining if it could be practicable once more to attempt the establishment of a colony in that country, thus expresses himself in a memoir in the "National Institutes." "The French government have, at long intervals, formed, or rather attempted to

quis de Mondevergue to the general command of all the French settlements situated beyond the equinoctial line. This, of course," continues that writer, "included Madagascar, which place was appointed the seat of his government. Thither he set sail in a frigate of thirty-six guns, followed by a fleet of nine vessels, having on board La Fage and Caron, directors of the East India trade, an attorney-general, four companies of infantry, ten chiefs of colonies, &c. The fleet arrived at Fort Dauphin; and the marquis immediately caused himself to be acknowledged admiral and governor of the French territories in the east." This reorganisation of the French settlement of Fort Dauphin took place in the early part of the year 1667;

form, establishments amongst these people; but the agents in these enterprises have attended exclusively to the interests and emoluments of the Europeans, and particularly their own profits; while the interests and well-being of the natives have been entirely forgotten. Some of these ministerial delegates have even been dishonest adventurers, and have committed a thousand atrocities. It cannot, therefore, excite surprise, that sometimes they have experienced marks of the resentment of the Malagasses."

and one of the first measures of the marquis, after his arrival, was the reconciling the natives of the locale in question to the presence of the French, between whom the most hostile relationship had lately subsisted. The consequence of this policy was, that a powerful chieftain, by name Dion Monango, who had waged successful warfare against his (the marquis's) countrymen, was induced to swear "obedience and fidelity to the governor-general."* In 1670, "the East India Company had transferred the sovereignty of Madagascar to the king of France;" and the marquis, being superseded in his command by another governor, called La Haye, the latter "was proclaimed admiral and general, with the authority of viceroy."† "Under La Haye, who possessed unlimited authority, the government of the island was conducted in a totally opposite spirit." This spirit was nothing less than that of summoning all the neighbouring chiefs to acknowledge his authority, or to prepare for war. The latter alternative was preferred by the natives, who repelled an

* Ellis, vol. ii. p. 25. † Ibid. vol. ii. p. 25.

attack from their invaders, and soon after, as we have explained already, drove the majority of the French from their shores, and put the remainder of them to the sword.*

Hitherto the French had confined their operations exclusively to their settlement at

* In reviewing this early connexion of the French with the Malagasy people, we are strongly reminded of its somewhat analogous history with that of the Spaniard's early tactics amongst, and subsequent retribution at the hands of, the natives of St. Domingo. Columbus, on landing in Hispaniola, proposed to be allowed to raise a fort, to which the people "agreed without a murmur, and even assisted in the erection of what was to be afterwards used as a means of their own subjection." Columbus, returning for awhile to Europe, "the garrison he had left behind grew impatient of restraint, and threw off the command of their newly appointed governor. Regardless of the prudent instructions which had been given them, the men who composed it became insolently independent, and gratified their avaricious and licentious desires at the expense of the natives, making a wasteful prey of their gold, their women, and their provisions; thus, instead of supporting the estimation in which they were held, exhibiting themselves as the most depraved of human beings. At length the cazique of Cibao, whose country the Spaniards chiefly infested, cut off a part of the colonists, surrounded the remainder, and destroyed their fort."—RAINSFORD's *History of St. Domingo.*

Fort Dauphin; and it does not appear that they took any other steps in connexion with Antongil Bay and St. Mary's Island than that of nominally declaring their title to it. Their operations upon Madagascar, as above detailed, were limited to the single spot already noticed; notwithstanding which, they were pleased, as subsequently appeared in the documents before alluded to, to consider the entire island as an appendage of their mother country. In recurring, at this point, to the fact in question, we might reasonably inquire to what extent the Malagasy nation were acquainted with the title set up by France to the possession of their country; and, supposing them to have been conversant with her self-constituted claims, in what spirit they were wont to digest the same? or were they *fobbed*, on the soft and easy Iago philosophy? that

> "He who is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
> Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all."

Upon the abandonment of Fort Dauphin no trace of the French sway remained in any part of Madagascar; and, for many years, it was known only to Europeans as a spot occa-

sionally visited by ships for water and provisions in their intercourse with India and the East. A long tranquillity seems now to have been enjoyed by the Malagasy, undisturbed by visions of French invasions; and it was not until about the year 1746 that we find that restless people again turning their eyes in its direction, when they formed a settlement once more in the great African Island, selecting St. Mary's Islet for their renewed experiment; but the ravages made amongst them by the endemic fever of the coast annihilated very soon the entire number of this last body of colonizers. The Isle of France, however, repeopled the spot, but again only to be devastated; for the settlers were soon afterwards massacred by the natives. Again St. Mary's was invested and retaken by a second expedition from Mauritius, and appears ever since to have remained in the possession of, or at least intimately connected with, French influence. So much confusion and vagueness occurs in Ellis at this particular point of his history, that the reader of his work is left to form his own conclusions as to the particular connexion which the French

from this time held with St. Mary's Island and the north-east coast of Madagascar, until the arrival of the celebrated Benyowsky in that country, in February 1774, whose earliest "step," he tells us, "was to convene the chiefs, in order to acquaint them with the nature of the intended establishment, and to endeavour to conciliate them. By these means," continues Ellis, "he obtained from them a grant of land, but without permission to erect fortresses; and an oath of friendship was entered into between him and several of the neighbouring chieftains." This remarkable individual made a landing in the Bay of Antongil, near to the entrance of which St. Mary's is situated; and the settlement, at that time formed by him, received the name of Louisbourg. The year following his arrival, a fort had been erected by his people, public buildings and roads constructed, and a sanitarium established at the distance of nine leagues from the centre of their operations. "The count had also purchased a considerable portion of land" at Louisbourg.

Count Benyowsky abandoned the French settlement in Madagascar in 1776, and was

killed, in 1786, by a small detachment of French soldiers from the Isle of France, who had been despatched to Louisbourg to intercept operations which he had begun to carry on in that quarter "on his own account."

During the period now under review, Ellis preserves a strict silence on the subject of St. Mary's Island; whilst another creditable writer (Mr. Copland), has only these few words in connexion with that insignificant spot:—"The French formed a settlement at St. Mary's Island, about the year 1750. Benyowsky" (who, the reader will remember, did not come upon the stage for more than twenty years after that date) "purchased it of Hiavi, the then sovereign of Foule-Pointe; but, in consequence of the expulsion of the French from Madagascar, it has now returned to its former dependency."

This writer, in the introduction to his work on Madagascar, informs us that, in the compilation of it, he consulted, as his text-books, the writings of Rochon, Flacourt, and other French authorities on the subject; to whom we may fairly look for a trustworthy statement on a question involving, not the pretensions, but

the relinquishment of their country's claims to territorial possessions in Madagascar.*

* Lest the reader may deem us too circumstantial in our inquiries concerning the early connexion of France with this insignificant spot, we must remind him (as at the outset of our task we brought particularly under his notice) that St. Mary's Islet is still in the hands of, and garrisoned by, the French. We have given ourselves much trouble to ascertain the particulars relating to the final occupation of St. Mary's by the French; and we believe we are correct in our statement, that it was ceded to that people by queen Beti (the sovereign of that part of Madagascar, including the isle in question), who either confirmed the original sale of it made by Hiavi, or bartered it again on her own account, some fifty years, or thereabouts, afterwards, since which period it has continued in the possession of France. A point of land, stretching out into the sea immediately opposite St. Mary's on the main land, was subsequently occupied by a strong native force, in order to guard the channel formed by those two sites, and to keep the French within their proper limits.

We had hoped to have discovered, in the recent pamphlet of Monsieur Désiré Laverdant, "On the Colonisation of Madagascar," something more satisfactory in the shape of information upon the subject of St. Mary's Island. But this writer preserves as close a silence thereon as Copland himself; for all that he tells us in connexion with France's first operations in that quarter is, that "the East India Company had formed an establishment on the Isle of St. Mary's in 1750," at which period he confirms the statement of former writers, that a native prince enjoyed the sovereignty of it.

For some years after the abandonment of the French settlement by Benyowsky, in 1776, "the French government appear to have given up all idea of establishing a colony in that island, confining their efforts to the maintenance of military posts and factories, for the purpose of trade with the natives, to obtain supplies of rice and bullocks for the Isle of France. The intention of forming an extensive colonial "settlement was thus lost sight of; but it was still considered desirable to make it an auxiliary to the Isle of France, as an important depôt for those engaged in the slave-trade, which continued to be carried on to a great extent throughout the whole island."*

Again,—"The French Revolution, which took place soon after Benyowsky had abandoned the colony, so fully engaged the attention of the French government, that, amidst the tragical and appalling events which crowd the page of history, it was scarcely possible to entertain any new project relating to the occupation of a distant island."†

The National Assembly of France, desirous,

* Ellis's "History of Madagascar," vol. ii.

† Ibid.

at the very close of the last century, of feeling the pulse of the Malagasy nation, with a view to ascertaining the favourable state of its constitution for a little wholesome depletion at the hands of their faculty of political physicians, sent out an emissary, in 1792, to inform himself upon the point. M. Lescallier, the party selected for the inquiry, thus delivers himself on an interesting point in connexion with the object of his mission, in the memoir which, as we have already said, he published in the "National Institutes:"—

"Europeans have hardly ever visited this island but to ill-treat the natives, and to exact forced services from them; to excite and foment quarrels amongst them, for the purpose of purchasing the slaves that are taken on both sides in the consequent wars: in a word, they have left no other marks of having been there but the effects of their cupidity."

Ellis informs us that, "at the desire of Lescallier, the chiefs entered into a treaty of alliance with the French;" but nothing appears to have sprung out of this attempt at negociation. But, "during the short peace of 1801, Bory de St. Vincent was sent" out to

Madagascar, with much the same object as had dictated the visit of Lescallier, but with equally little success as relates to any final advantage on the side of France. Finally, in 1807, a party of Frenchmen from the Isle of France laid the foundation of a settlement at Foule-Pointe (a spot, as previously stated, occupying a site between St. Mary's Island and Tamatave), where, however, they had scarcely cemented their arrangements for the future when disease swept them off from the spot.

In 1810, Mauritius and Bourbon were ceded, by conquest, to the English, and hence a sufficient explanation of the discouragement which the French, from that time, experienced to attempt any repetition (in the then lowering state of their colonial horizon) of their original experiments upon Madagascar.

Mr. Ellis (the most recent writer, if we except Laverdant's pamphlet upon Madagascar, and deservedly entitled to our highest confidence, as the faithful historian of that country, on whom, as such, we have principally depended as our authority on points requiring a reference to authentic works) has wound up his account of the connexion of

France with Madagascar at that point where it virtually ceased, as a consequence of our own increasing influence in the southern hemisphere. But we are fortunately enabled to bring down our history of their still subsisting, although less conspicuous, operations upon the same stage to a period much later than that embraced by this writer; as well as to throw some additional light upon certain points in the course of his "Narrative," which are either obscurely treated of, or entirely left to the reader's own conception.

We extract the following from the manuscript of Dr. Bergsten, a resident at Mauritius of forty years' standing, and an authority of weight on the subject before us. His name is honourably introduced in Laverdant's pamphlet.

"M. de Rasseline, who was one of the expedition that went against Benyowsky, remained at the head of the traders, but without making any pretensions to the government of Madagascar, or even to that of the tribes which were governed by Benyowsky. He continued, under the government of the Republic, to trade with Mauritius and Bourbon,

without any other power that that of being the chief of the traders.

"Under General Decaen's* government, M. Sylvain Roux was sent to Tamatave, as chief of the traders, and Mr. Jumain to Foule-Pointe. These both made arrangements with the chiefs which they found established there —'Jean Mené' at Tamatave, and Corollere at Betanimene; and it is very sure that neither of those gentlemen ever supposed that the permission which they had to reside in Madagascar constituted a right of possession. They were satisfied with being allowed to trade there, and were glad to do so under the countenance of the two chiefs whose names we have mentioned.

"The capitulation of 1810 again corroborates our reasoning, and demonstrates, in the most positive and evident manner, that France has no title whatever which can esta-

* General Decaen (governor of Mauritius at the time mentioned in the text) was a general of division in Moreau's army; and, falling under the First Consul's suspicion (together with certain other general officers belonging to that army, after the peace of Amiens), he was sent out as governor of the French possessions in India.

blish the pretensions raised by the Bourbon journals.* By that document, we find that this island" (Mauritius), "with its dependencies, was ceded to the British government: this cession was confirmed by the treaty of Paris, and enregistered by the competent authorities in France and England. No mention at all is made of Madagascar, much less of any right of the French government to that island.

"After the taking of Paris, and the determination of the Allies to reinstate the Bourbons on the throne of France, the Count of Provence went to London to take leave of the Prince Regent, before taking possession of the throne of his ancestors; and it was then that the Island of Bourbon was restored to Louis XVIII.; and Madagascar was not comprised in this restoration, for it did not belong either to France or England.

* The press, at the Isle of Bourbon, every now and then diverts its readers (whensoever slack of news) with relays of arguments in favour of the divine right of la belle France to trip up the heels of Ranavalona, and suspend the tricoloured flag of their country upon the most conspicuous point of Madagascar!

"The governor and merchants of Bourbon, being well aware of the importance of the trade of Madagascar, were naturally unwilling that Mauritius should enjoy the exclusive commerce of that island, which would have been of serious injury to Bourbon. An explanation on this head, therefore, took place between the two governments, and an order was sent to the governor of Mauritius to admit French traders into the ports of Madagascar without notice. In virtue of this order, M. Sylvain Roux, before mentioned, returned to Tamatave.* After his death, he was replaced by Mr. Dayot, as French agent at Madagascar.

"He was still there during the expedition of Captain Goubeyer,† when the Hova government, having declared that they would not

* The reader will be pleased to remember that, upon the capture of Mauritius by England, the French agents were summoned, by a force we sent to Madagascar, to quit Tamatave and the other ports where they had stationed themselves.

† Captain Goubeyer conducted an expedition to Madagascar in 1829; on the subject of which we shall have to say a word or two a little later in our inquiry.

receive any longer, or recognise, a French agent, Mr. Dayot received orders to leave the island! The government of Bourbon having declared that its mother-country had ancient and incontestable rights on Madagascar, Governor Farquhar issued the following proclamation, which we think it just to lay before our readers, and which we extract from the work of M. Désiré Laverdant, whose article is in some sort a refutation of, as well as an answer to, the Bourbon journals.

"PROCLAMATION.

"1. That he considered Madagascar as an independent power, at present united with the king of England by treaties of friendship and alliance, on whose territories no nation whatever had any right of property, except such as the native government might be disposed to admit.

"2. That it had been notified by this same power (that of the Hovas) to the government of Mauritius, and to the commandant of the British naval forces in these seas, that they did not acknowledge any rights of pro-

perty in the soil of Madagascar on the part of any European power."*

M. Laverdant himself acknowledges that Radama disallowed all title on the part of France to any part of his country. "Radama refusa bientôt de reconnaitre à la France aucun droit sur la grande terre, et se déclara, roi de toute l'isle."—P. 76.

* Can any thing, after this, be wanting to refute the evidence attempted to be substantiated in favour of our present title to Port Loquez? But we anticipate.

CHAPTER VIII.

Connexion between England and Madagascar—Plans devised for an English Settlement in the Island—Commencement of English Connexion with Madagascar—Proclamation announcing the taking possession of Madagascar in the name of his Britannic Majesty—Permanent Residence of English Agents in the Island—Effects of Climate—Notes from the Manuscripts of the late Captain Le Sage—Examination of British Claims—Evacuation of Port Loquez—Consequences of having recognised Radama's Sovereignty—Respective Claims of England and France considered and disproved—Petition from the Colonists of Bourbon to Louis Philippe—Probable Manœuvres of the French unless counteracted by the British Government—Instance of French Machinations—Hostilities between the French and Ranavalona.

HAVING furnished the reader with what we believe to be a faithful abstract of those incidents on which the French ground their pretensions to a territorial interest in Madagascar, we proceed, in the next place, briefly to notice the relationship subsisting between our own country and that island; when the reader will be

able to form his opinion as to the side in favour of which the evidence preponderates in the question of priority of claim upon Madagascar.

We have stated, in a preceding part of our subject, that Flacourt, in his "History of Madagascar," asserts, that the "English had a military establishment, in 1642, at St. Augustin's Bay, consisting of 200 men — a fourth part of which was carried off, in the space of two years, by the insalubrity of the climate." Not having been able to meet with the original work itself, of Flacourt, we have extracted from Ellis's history the mention of this fact; but are unable either to confirm or contradict it by a reference to the sources of information which we have consulted in the course of this undertaking. Amongst other reasons, however, which induce us to discredit Flacourt's statement, we may mention the fact, that in Mr. Boothby's account of the island, written in 1644, no sort of allusion is made to the existence of an English settlement in Madagascar.

It is affirmed by Mr. Boothby that, in his time, the English government seriously meditated the sending a viceroy to Madagascar, and consequently, we presume, the laying vio-

lent hands upon the island! The honour of this appointment, he informs us, was carved out for Prince Rupert. "I was present," says Mr. Boothby, "when this was ordered" (alluding to the equipment of the expedition), "at the council table; but Prince Rupert, going into France and Germany about his weighty affairs, in the meantime it was thought fit, and concluded upon, that the Earl of Arundel, earl-marshal of England, should go governor for Madagascar, it being the most famous place in the world for a magazine. This noble earl," he continues, "hath written a book to that purpose, and allowed weekly means of subsistence to divers seamen, who have good judgment and experience all over the Oriental Seas and at Madagascar. This honourable earl was in such resolution and readiness, that there were printed bills put up on the pillars of the Royal Exchange, and in other parts of the city, that abundantly shewed his forwardness in promoting a plantation in Madagascar; but a new parliament being called, it put a stop to the design of Madagascar."

The foregoing information, if authentic

(and it is difficult to account for a man's motives in the production of so unintelligible a piece of fiction), forces us into the necessary admission, that if England has been less conspicuous in her early encroachments upon Madagascar than her neighbour, it has not resulted either from a want of inclination to enter upon that field of action, and still less from her recognising a higher standard of principle; for, according to Boothby's account, we had actually planned the nucleus of an English settlement in the country, and were only withheld by political interruptions from carrying that plan into execution!

We pass over those settlements formed at different points of Madagascar, at a period subsequent to the one of which we have just spoken, by hordes of English as well as French freebooters, who, issuing from their strongholds in the island upon their own element, drove a long and successful trade at the expense of European vessels trafficking to India and different parts of the East. We pass by these lawless and uninvited settlers, and conduct the reader to the period to which we have before already introduced him, when our first

substantial connexion with Madagascar commenced. This epoch in our colonial history takes its date from the moment of our conquest of Bourbon and Mauritius, when, as has been stated in a preceding part of these sheets, Sir Robert Farquhar issued a proclamation, wherein he announced his "taking possession of Madagascar, as one of the dependencies of the Mauritius, in the name of his Britannic Majesty." "Immediately after the conquest of these islands, the English sent a detachment to Foule-Pointe, and another to Tamatave, to take possession of the forts formerly occupied by the French in Madagascar."* These forces were not sent to Madagascar as mere matters of form; for a British man-of-war, the Eclipse, summoned the French commandant at Tamatave, M. Sylvain Roux, to deliver up to her that port, together with all the other French establishments in the island over which he exercised any control. This he immediately did without resistance. The military force which Sir Robert Farquhar sent to garrison Tamatave, Foule-Pointe, &c., were so reduced

* Ellis's "History of Madagascar," vol. ii.

in number by the fatal nature of the climate, that the remnant were withdrawn, and a British agent alone was left to support our pretensions to these settlements. It has been well remarked by an inhabitant of Mauritius (who was a resident there at the time these occurrences took place, and to whose intimate acquaintance with the facts now recorded we are indebted for much of the information at present offered to the reader), that "the permanent residence of these agents proves sufficiently that our government never abandoned their possessions in Madagascar!"

"In 1815, a party of English was sent over to form an establishment at Fort Loquez, with the consent of the neighbouring chiefs."*

The whole of this party, with the exception of one man, experienced, through a stupid misunderstanding, not very intelligible at the present day, a most tragical fate in the form of a general massacre. Complete satisfaction was instantly offered for this outrage, which seems to have been planned, if not executed, by a single disaffected chieftain; for he was appre-

* Ellis's "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. p. 110.

hended by the natives themselves, tried, condemned, and executed on the spot where the massacre was accomplished. "Governor Farquhar was so well convinced by these proceedings of the friendly disposition of the chiefs in general, that another party was sent to establish themselves at Loquez. As soon as they arrived, the neighbouring chiefs came forward, and tendered their friendship and alliance; and, considering that the unhappy affair which had taken place required more ample amends, they ceded to the settlers an extensive tract of land and large herds of cattle, the former being guaranteed to them in a solemn kabary, in right of a previous purchase."*

This last negotiation was conducted by an individual who has resided ever since at Mauritius, and only very recently been removed from thence by the mischief his constitution had sustained from the effects of the fatal climate of Madagascar. This much-respected, whilst living, and deeply-regretted person, Captain Le Sage, had, shortly before

* Ellis's "History of Madagascar," vol. ii. p. 112.

his decease, submitted his manuscripts, together with the documents in his possession relating to the negotiation in question, to the notice of a party by whom we have been favoured with the following transcript from their contents:—

"The settlement appears to have been made, in the first instance, in 1815, on the following principle laid down in Captain Le Sage's instructions: that 'Madagascar was become a dependency of the Mauritius by the conquest of all the French possessions in that island and these seas by the British.'

"The rights of the natives were, nevertheless, respected by the British agents, who purchased various portions of land for the British government. But a further and specific acquisition of territory was made by Great Britain. The settlement having been destroyed, and the British agent and others having been massacred, in violation of the most solemn treaties, the British government demanded, through the mission of Captain Le Sage, and obtained, a satisfaction from five native kings in a further extensive cession of territory.

"The extent of the ceded territory is variously estimated in the documents we have seen:—M. Balbi* mentions 100 square miles; M. Le Sage informed us, verbally, that it was as far as the eye could reach from the summit of a high mountain, on which the natives were assembled under their five kings, when the cession was made. It appears, at least, to have comprehended the entire land lying between Cape East and the 'extreme north point of Madagascar, comprehending the peninsula and splendid Bay of Diego Famen.'"

"This took place in 1816, after the peace of Europe. The treaty with Radama, the King of the Hovas, in Madagascar, was ratified in 1817, and renewed about two years afterwards; but no cession of Port Loquez was made in that treaty. On the contrary, the British government regarded that treaty

* "Monsieur Balbi, in his celebrated work, 'Abrégé de Geographie,' under the article 'Ile de Madagascar,' has the following passage:—'Il paraît que c'est aussi sur le territoire de ce peuple que se trouve le beau Port Loquez, où d'après de recentes notices, un territoire de 100 milles carrés a été cédé dernièrement aux Anglais pour y former un etablissement.'"—*Taken from the documents referred to in the text.*

as a means of facilitating and accelerating the settlement of Madagascar by British subjects, as will appear from the following quotation of a proclamation of Sir Robert Farquhar, extracted from the Mauritius government 'Gazette' of 3d March, 1821, inviting British subjects to settle in Madagascar; the treaty with Radama, to which his excellency refers, being the 'means now adopted as a preliminary step to a permanent and extensive settlement and establishment of that great country.'"

The author of the foregoing extract (who embodies in his own language the substance derived from Captain Le Sage's manuscripts) is borne out, we think, by nothing he has favoured us with from that source in the conclusion he comes to,—that the fragment quoted from Sir Robert Farquhar's proclamation is any testimony in proof of the assertion that we meditated a future colonisation of Port Loquez, because Sir Robert chose to proclaim the opinion, or (we may be permitted to say) the fact, that the treaty at that time entered into between himself (on the part of the British government) and Radama was "a preliminary step to a perma-

nent and extensive settlement and establishment of Madagascar (not, be it observed, of Port Loquez), we are not so to distort that suggestion as to understand by it that it confirmed us in our claims upon Loquez. We throw out this remark, by the way, as it behoves us in an inquiry like the present to be upon our guard, lest we suffer facts to be sacrificed to the advancement of an interested but spurious reasoning.

"When Captain Le Sage left Loquez to proceed on a mission to King Radama, he left the establishment in charge of Lieutenant Pye of the R. M. and a certain number of soldiers under his charge: at this time Mr. Doderlein was the British agent at Tamatave.

"The treaty entered into and concluded with King Radama by Captain Le Sage was confirmed, in October 1817, by Captain Stanfell, of his majesty's ship Phaeton.

"King Radama, with the view of giving to his Britannic majesty's government a proof of the sincerity of his intentions, published, in October 1820, a proclamation, by which he invited and encouraged the enterprises and commercial intercourse of resident planters

and handicraftsmen, subjects of Great Britain, to visit and settle in his country, with promises of his powerful assistance and protection. This proclamation, which was made public at Mauritius in March 1821, induced many British subjects, who were disposed to take advantage of the king's encouragement, to carry the means of their arts and industry to his dominions, notwithstanding the insalubrity of the climate; and they certainly had no cause either to repent or complain, during the sway of that enlightened monarch, whose reign, unfortunately for those British subjects who had fixed themselves at Tamatave and elsewhere, was decreed to be of short duration.*

In the preceding digest of the British connexion with Madagascar, we have omitted nothing material as relates to the interests of our own country; and, from an impartial examination of that connexion, we are placed

* Extracted from the letter of a resident at Mauritius (who was settled in that colony at the period of which he treats, and who speaks from a personal knowledge of the facts advanced), published in the "Watchman," in connexion with "Documents Respecting British Possessions in Madagascar."

in a position to judge for ourselves as to the nature of the claims which it is the fashion with many Englishmen, who take an interest in the subject, to maintain that we possess to a footing in Madagascar. The territory ceded to us in 1816, in the district of Port Loquez (and, which, according to all the documents we have had access to, appears to have been *bonâ fide* purchased by Captain Le Sage on the part of the British government), became legitimately the property of England, so long as England found it answer her purpose to retain it. But, having fairly relinquished our title thereto, by the simple fact of withdrawing unconditionally from it; and having required no provision to be inserted in the treaty into which we entered with Radama for its permanent cession to England, or for our subsequent resumption of it, it is preposterous now to argue, after being the immediate instrument of enabling Radama to proclaim himself King of Madagascar, that any previous compact entered into with a local chieftain can warrant our unsaying what we then said (viz. that we recognised Radama as King of Madagascar), and seeking to regain what we virtually

gave up to him on so flimsy, nay, so dishonest, a pretence as that, we consented to acknowledge him as sovereign of the entire country, with the mental reservation that he was to consider himself as holding that part of his dominions as a vassal of the King of England, to be resumed by that monarch whensoever it might please him or his successors to demand it.

Ridiculous as such a mode of reasoning cannot but appear to unprejudiced judges of the matter, it is literally the only one upon which we can understand the arguments of those who divert themselves with speculations upon "our possessions in the north-east of Madagascar." Had Great Britain desired to retain, or considered herself entitled to hold it after her acknowledgment of Radama's right to the sovereignty of the country, it is self-evident that she would have provided for her own interests in this particular, upon entering into a treaty of friendship with that power.

But let us take another view of the matter, and, admitting these principles to hold good, and, consequently, that in evacuating Port Loquez, and entering into no understanding

with Radama for its resumption, we virtually surrendered our pretensions to its possession, let us inquire to what extent we can consider ourselves authorised to reclaim it, upon the grounds that the successor of that monarch, having violated the terms of the treaty, the very first clause of which was framed with a view "to maintain with England for ever mutual confidence, friendship, and brotherhood," we, on our part, can no longer be bound by the conditions of that treaty; but, on the contrary, may fairly consider ourselves released from all the obligations to which we consented on becoming a party thereto. Here we have plainly as little ground whereon to take up a position as before; and, for the reason that no mention is made in that treaty of our conditional relinquishment of Port Loquez. With equal reason might the Portuguese, the first discoverers of Mauritius, again return to and re-claim that island, on the pretence that they withdrew from it originally without any specific guarantee that they might not thereafter reinvest it; and that, not having entered into a treaty with the rocks and forests (when they quitted the spot), or

registered a deed in their own favour, to be left in charge of the "Peter-botte," to the purport that they relinquished the island for ever, they were justly entitled to return at the present day, and enter again upon its possession.

But, it is argued, again, by others that Queen Ranavalona has usurped the throne of Madagascar, and that, on that ground, we might excuse ourselves from an over squeamishness in the matter before us. In a word, that there can be no valid objections to our stealing from a thief; for such, in reality, the argument reduces itself to, when fashioned to suit this view of the case. But a difficulty no less insuperable than the foregoing encounters the advocates of this position also; and that is, that we did not suffer this circumstance to intrude itself upon us to her disadvantage, so long as we found it convenient to preserve a good understanding with her majesty. In confirmation of this truth, it is only necessary to remind the reader that we kept a British agent, Mr. Lyall, at her capital, until, like a spy or an infected being, he was chased out of her dominions, without repara-

tion for the insult even being asked for. Neither did we suffer the fact of her invalid title to the throne to stand in the way of our receiving a deputation from her court at the palace of St. James's, or of renewing our exertions to obtain a readmission at her hands of English missionaries into Madagascar. It is mere child's play, therefore, to turn upon her now, after an interval of twenty years' enjoyment of the throne, and pretend that we can hold no terms with an usurper; and that, unless she secedes therefrom, in favour of Radama's lawful successor, we shall re-enter, without further ado, upon our old possessions on the north-east coast of the kingdom.

Thus, having afforded an impartial and dispassionate examination to the claims, respectively, of France and England, upon that vast country which forms the subject of this dissertation, we shall put forth the result, as relates to each empire, in the following tabular form, whereby we trust the fullest justice will be shewn to have been conceded to the so-termed claims of both :—

Claims of France to Territorial Acquisitions in Madagascar.

1st. The seizing on, about the middle of the seventeenth century, and occupation of the district to which the settlers gave the name of Fort Dauphin, towards the south-east extremity of the island, and from which they were ultimately completely eradicated by massacre. The nominal occupation of St. Mary's Island, on the north-east coast, and of Antongil Bay on the same, taken possession of at the same time with Fort Dauphin, but apparently not then colonised.

2d. The reinvesting of St. Mary's Island, about a hundred years after the first nominal occupation of it; and, a few years afterwards, the more successful attempt of Count Benyowsky to implant a French colony, in the district of Antongil Bay; this second settlement, however, undergoing, like the former, a total dissolution,

Claims of England to Territorial Acquisitions in Madagascar.

1st. Madagascar claimed by England as an appendage of Mauritius, upon the conquest of that colony by her arms; this right to Madagascar being entirely based upon France's prior assertion of right to the same; and, owing to which, the ports then in the actual hands of French agents were demanded, and actually given up to England.

The retention of an English agent at Tamatave up to our treaty with Radama.

The cession of Port Loquez to the English in 1815–16, guaranteed in right of purchase.

Upon the ratification of our treaty with Radama, England virtually withdrew her pretensions to Tamatave and other ports (amongst others, Port Loquez), by recalling her authorities from those places, by acknowledging Radama as king of Madagascar, and, in

and witnessing the unconditional abandonment, on the part of France, of all renewals to engraft a colony on the main land.

3d. The reoccupation (apparently about the opening of the present century), of St. Mary's Island, acquired, according to the generally received opinion, by purchase from Queen Beti, the acknowledged sovereign of that island, and neighbouring part of the main land. This island never since relinquished by France; at the same time that it has received no aggrandisement from Madagascar itself, either by right of capture or secession.

4th. The residence of a French agent at Tamatave and Foule-Pointe, upon our conquest of Bourbon and Mauritius; these individuals having been dismissed from the country at the period of our nominally taking possession of Madagascar, and only subsequently readmitted with the a treaty with that sovereign, providing by no stipulation for our subsequent resumption of the same.

These circumstances being plainly declaratory of the surrender of all previous claims upon Madagascar, added to which, England has, within the last half dozen years, most positively refused to listen to the prayer of a large portion of the commercial body of Mauritius, to reoccupy the territory formerly ceded to us in the north-east part of the island.

sanction and approval of Great Britain, and then only for the purposes of commerce.* These commercial agents again dismissed from Madagascar in 1829 by the present sovereign, and never subsequently again tolerated by the same, nor their readmission insisted on by France.

So much for the claims of either country to the whole, or to any portion of the Island of Madagascar.

* At page 94 of his pamphlet on the colonising of Madagascar, Monsieur Désiré Laverdant has published a statement in connexion with the conduct of England towards France, on the subject of the pretensions of the latter to territorial rights in Madagascar, which offers a fair specimen of the integrity of that writer in his general political observations :—

"La paix venue, le gouverneur de Maurice élève la pretention de conserver Malegache comme une annexe de l'Ile Maurice. En même temps il faisait une tentative d'établissement sur un point de la côte que les Français n'avaient point encore occupé, Port Loquez. Le gouvernement de la restauration protesté, fait valoir ses justes droits, et l'Angleterre est obligée de se desister, et de remettre au gouverneur de l'Ile Bourbon les établissements qu'elle avait saisis pendant la guerre."

"Les établissements!" By this expression, M. Laver-

The combined attack of the French and English flotilla upon Tamatave had scarcely been made known at Bourbon, when the colonists of that island received a fresh spur to reopen and agitate again the "exclusive rights" of France to possess herself of Madagascar, or of as much of it as might suit her views to adopt. Intent upon this object, they availed themselves of the occasion to raise their "most sweet voices" in a cause so sacred, and, with no more delay than was absolutely needed to rally their forces, a petition was concocted and hurried off to Louis-

dant would have the reader believe that France obliged us to restore Tamatave and Foule-Pointe to her, as well as to declare that we considered her the lawful proprietor of Port Loquez: whereas, upon acknowledging Radama as king of Madagascar, we withdrew our claims to his ports, but continued to keep an agent at Tamatave. The governor of Bourbon then sent agents to Mauritius, demanding that they should be received at Madagascar; but the British governor positively refused to suffer them admission until the feelings of his government were taken on the point. In consequence of this reference, they were suffered to enter the island again, but in no other capacity than that of commercial agents; and, as we shall presently shew, they were subsequently excluded from the country by Ranavalona, and have never since been readmitted.

Philippe, embodying the earnest prayer that his majesty would embrace the present opportunity of sending them a force to colonise Madagascar. The petitioners manifest some shyness in coming to the point at once, of reducing the island by a *coup de main*, for they avoid in their prayer to utter the startling dissyllable which palpably lies so near to their hearts; viz. that of conquest, coiled up there, an *anguis in herbâ*, to be called forth at a later stage of their tactics. In the same petition, numerous details are given as to the nature, the numbers, and the operations of the force required for the purpose in question; and nothing now remains for them to accomplish but to make their arrangements amongst themselves for a general division of the prize. How this petition will be received by his majesty, and in what sort of humour his ministers may find themselves with regard to it, it boots not to speculate upon.* But, howsoever tempting to French cupidity such

* If any confidence is to be placed in the declarations of statesmen, beyond the moment that policy renders them inconvenient, we have a recent guarantee from the lips of France's greatest statesman, that nothing will be attempted

an opening (whereby the national mania for possessions in the Southern Atlantic might be gratified), we have very few fears that any step will be undertaken in a matter of so much moment, without the previous consent of Great Britain. Indeed, after the recent transactions at Tamatave, France can take no step in relation to Madagascar without consulting the feelings of that power, with which she is in honour bound to co-operate. Should such a political anomaly arise out of the offensive operations against Madagascar, as that England should disapprove of the step taken therein by Captain Kelly, whilst France sees nothing in it but matter of congratulation and approval, it will then remain to be seen with what degree of complacency Great Britain will comport herself as a spectator, whilst her neighbour helps herself to the prize. That France will leave no argument or contrivance

in the way of colonising, on a large scale, by that power at a distance from the mother-country.

"Il convenait peu à la politique et au génie de la France de tenter, á de grandes distances de son territoire, de nouveaux et grands établissements coloniaux."—M. GUIZOT, *Séance, du* 31 *Mars*, 1843.

unattempted, which can bring her nearer to the attainment of this object, no one who has watched, or who has any acquaintance with, her juggling of late years at a distance from European *surveillance*, can for a moment entertain a doubt. For ourselves, we feel a conviction that she will so manœuvre in the present crisis as to throw the lasso over the neck of Ranavalona, unless England make a decided demonstration in discountenance of such an attempt.

We entertain strong suspicions that the presence of a British frigate at Tamatave, in June 1845, was as little matter of satisfaction to the governor of Bourbon, as it has favoured ulterior projects, on the part of his government, in connexion with the transfer of Madagascar to the hands of France; for, we think, there is but little room to doubt that Commodore de la Fosse had his instructions to fire upon the place, should any equivocation be displayed by the Malagasy authorities in a compliance with his demands.* And we must

* Very opposite opinions (as stated in an early part of this article) are held by Europeans on the spot, as well as

own a latent feeling of suspicion, that had Fortune ordained it so, that a British man-of-war had not been available at the period under review, the French diplomatists would have made short work of the matter, by exaggerating the wrongs they had met with, and, by

in the mother-country, in reference to the propriety of the summary step adopted by Captain Kelly at Tamatave. But, in addition to what we have already advanced in favour of his conduct therein, we take upon ourselves to make the following further observations in justification of the same. Captain Kelly went to Tamatave with a discretionary power to act as might seem best to his own judgment: and if it be considered hereafter that that judgment misled him, why, then, we consider him excused upon the plea that "*sapere semper ipsi Jovi non datur!*" Again, Captain Kelly appears to ourselves to have been placed in a position not a little embarrassing. We may represent him as obliged to choose between three alternatives.

In the first place, to depart *à l'instant*, and leave the field to the sole occupation of the French commodore.

Secondly, to remain inactive, whilst M. De la Fosse was bespattering himself with *glory*, and acquiring a title for his government to put Madagascar in its own pocket.

Thirdly, to join in the attack, either in consonance with his own inclinations, or in order not to see his country out-manœuvered in the sequel, and deprived of the power of interposing in its own, or in behalf of the unhappy natives of the soil.

speedily enacting a modern rehearsal of St. Domingo, or, at the very least, by making the occasion a pretence to rear their "flag of protection" in Madagascar! That France will hold herself in reserve for this line of tactics on a very early opportunity (should England decline to "be juggled with" at present), every thing connected with her recent conduct in the Southern Ocean is irresistibly calculated to predict.

Every thing, we say, connected with the recent conduct of France in these seas (and, we may add, in other parts of the world, of late years), entitles us to distrust her integrity in relation to Madagascar. We shall venture to be a little circumstantial in corroboration of this assertion.

In the year 1829 or 1830, a French expedition was planned in France, with the view of attacking and taking possession of some of the sea-ports upon the eastern coast of Madagascar. Instructions were accordingly sent to their naval commander-in-chief upon the South American Station, to dispatch a force from thence to the dominions of her Malagasy majesty, and to carry out the benevolent inten-

tions of the French ministry. The expedition made at once for Bourbon, where it was strengthened by such disposable force as awaited it; and, thus complete in its arrangements, presented itself at once in the roads of Tamatave. Not to be too minute in an affair of such trifling moment, suffice it to say, that, after destroying the fort and massacring an immense number of the inoffensive natives,* the armament proceeded to Foule-Pointe, where it met with a somewhat different reception. In a word, the native forces visited the French with a severe retribution, and drove them in disgrace from their shores. The result of the attack upon this latter point appears so inconsistent with what might be expected from a regularly organised French force, that, lest the reader might be disposed to discredit the source whence we derive our information, we shall give him a brief summary of the transaction from M. Laverdant's own account of it.

"The commandant amused himself with throwing fifteen or eighteen hundred balls

* "C'avait été une horrible bouchérie, et les plaines, à une grande distance, étaient convertes de cadavres."—LAVERDANT, p. 178.

upon the huts of the abandoned village, and then disembarked his troops, in order to make an attack upon the fort, which stood in the back-ground of the locale, beyond the reach of the cannon: As the soldiery advanced, a few miserable guns from the Hova fort (*mauvaises pièces du fort*) discharged their contents amongst the ranks of the invaders. At the very first discharge, a captain cried out, "*Sauve qui peut!*" upon which 1500 French soldiers took to their heels, having no more than 200 native soldiers in front of them" (1500 Français prirent la fuite, n'ayant pas devant eux plus de 200 soldats barbares). "The day after this brilliant exploit," continues M. Laverdant, "M. Goubeyer weighed anchor, and proceeded to bombard the fort of Pointe-à-Lanée, where a great number of women and children lost their lives!" The Queen Ranavalona, upon learning what had happened in her country, took occasion to exclaim, says Laverdant, "One Goubeyer is come into our island, who massacres our women, but runs away from the men!"

Thus terminated an expedition projected by the French nation against the lives and

liberties of an almost defenceless and semi-barbarous people! *Viva la Gloire Française!** *Voilà*, act the first.

Antecedent to the year 1841, the natives of the east coast of Madagascar had been in the habit of resorting to the French settlement of St. Mary's Island, no less for protection from the Hova officers than for manual employment. This step on the part of her subjects could not but be displeasing to Ranavalona (with whom, as we have so often remarked, the feudal system rendered the Malagasy people serfs of the soil), and who remonstrated strongly against the conduct of the French authorities in that island, and constantly demanded that they should be sent back to her. But the French treated her appeals with contempt. At last her majesty, agreeing with the Roman's argument, that "*sunt certi denique fines*," &c., prepared an expedition to recover them by the persuasions of "*vi et armis*," to which end she consulted the utmost resources of her kingdom. But

* Gourbeyer's expedition was immortalised, in the French newspapers, as a "*glorieuse campagne!*" The fact is asserted by Laverdant himself.

the projected invasion fell to the ground, thereby strengthening the French contempt for, and influence against, her. But now, as if to turn the tables on Ranavalona, and to punish her for a presumption so unusual, the authorities of Nosibé (or Nos-Beh), an islet on the north-west coast of Madagascar, which (as we shall presently more particularly relate) the French had a short time before contrived to get into their hands, organised a force of native marauders to retaliate upon her possessions along the east coast. This they did with no little success, revenging themselves upon the queen by the massacre of some of her commandants, by the capture of her cannon and cattle, as well as by the leading away into slavery a vast number of her Betsimasaraka subjects. It is positively stated that the captured slaves were carried off to Nosibé. But the difficulty of procuring minute information from the natives (in the absence of any agent of our own in the country) must keep us much in the dark, in reference to any thing beyond the outline of the operations of the French in the less frequented parts of Madagascar.

In the next place, let us turn our eyes to

Nosibé itself, when we shall meet with another confirmation of what we have thrown out upon the subject of France's views upon Madagascar. This islet, which is nearly of similar extent to St. Mary's, lies but a few miles off the north-western coast of the country.

Insignificant as on the map it would appear to be, Nosibé was of sufficient importance in the eyes of the French government to render it a desirable position for the establishment of a colony. Accordingly, in 1840, it suddenly became a French possession. If, at Mauritius, the question be started, To what circumstances France is indebted for her occupation of Nosibé? it is replied by the few to whom the subject has ever before occurred—It was purchased, we *suppose*, we *believe*, or we *presume*, from the natives!

Without having it in our power to present the reader with any more definite information upon the *quomodo* of their negotiations, we shall give the explanation of a Frenchman upon the matter. "Les menaces de guerre qui, en 1840, retentirent dans toute l'Europe, décidèrent M. Thiers à envoyer l'ordre de *prendre possession* de Nosse-Bé." And Nosse-Bé was taken possession of accordingly.

CHAPTER IX.

French aggression upon Madagascar — Exposition of the Policy of France—Their Encroachments on the Comoro Isles—Address of the Chiefs of Mohilla to the Governor of Mauritius—Mayotta, a French Possession —Seizure of Nosibé ordered by Thiers—Guizot's opinion on French pretensions to Madagascar—French Colonisation—Extracts from documents in support of French Claims—Their insolidity established—British Interference called for to repress the outrages of Ranavalona's Government—The annexation of the Island to the British Empire not necessary to this end—The dethronement of Ranavalona, establishment of a British Agent, and re-introduction of Christianity, essential to the well-being of Madagascar—Steps to be taken for the improvement of Madagascar—Good effects of a Coalition between England and France—Reasons for turning the attention of the British Legislature to the present state of Madagascar.

Upon the occasion of France laying summary hands upon Nosibé, a very remarkable proclamation was published, at Bourbon, by Admiral "de Hell," the then governor of that colony. The gallant officer, after a few political flourishes upon the importance of the

acquisition to France (wherein a seasonable tribute was paid to the national diffidence of their Alma Mater, in comparison with that which characterised the grasping government of Great Britain), proceeded to excuse the occupation of it by an argument which, however based upon a truism, was, nevertheless, a singular manifestation of the spirit in which it was seized upon, and could not have tended to raise respect in the breasts, either of his own countrymen or of ours, for the power which acknowledged such a calculation. "In our occupation of Nosibé," says M. le Contre-Amiral de Hell in his proclamation, "we cannot be expected to be called upon for an account of our conduct therein by Great Britain; nor are we likely to raise her displeasure at the act, inasmuch as that power has already helped herself pretty bountifully to possessions at a distance." We fully concur with the gallant admiral in his critique, but question the sagacity which prompted him to commit his government with the world, as capable of perpetrating an act of dishonesty, in virtue of the security which they enjoyed from being interrupted in the act by Great Britain.

Thus secure in their possession of Nosibé,

the French began to direct their eyes towards the Comoro Isles, a group lying nearly midway between the northern extremity of Madagascar and the neighbouring continent of Africa, at the extremity of the Mozambique Channel. These islands were formerly in the possession of, or at least did fealty to, the Imaun of Muscat; but to this power they do not now any longer appear to be tributary: they are governed, however, not by African but by Arab princes—a family of purely Mahometan habits and descent. The Malagasse have for centuries diverted and enriched themselves by periodic invasions of these islands, on which occasions they have been in the habit of carrying off the natives, as slaves, to their own country. Sir Robert Farquhar exerted himself, with much success, to put a stop to these outrages.

Amongst this group of islands, that nearest to Nosibé and Bourbon, and, consequently, offering some advantages, in point of situation, over the rest, is "Mayotta." Mayotta, accordingly, the French determined to make their own. Nor were they long in putting their resolution into practice; for, at the end of the very same year in which Nosibé had

been laid violent hands upon, or early in the next, we find Mayotta figuring as a French colony. The following, as throwing some light upon the manner of its acquisition, will not be without its interest to the reader:—

"About the close of the year 1841, information of a private nature was received at Mauritius, to the effect that a French man-of-war had sailed from Nosibé to take possession of Mayotta; and the same accounts gave out that the chief or king of that island (who was a prince of Malagasy blood, and possessed, it is said, an hereditary right to the northern districts of Madagascar) had fled, in consequence, to another of the Comoro Isles, viz. Johanna. Moreover, that the French had declared Mohilla (another of the same group) to be under their protection, 'thereby, along with their aggressive proceedings at Johanna, manifesting their intention of occupying the whole of the Comoro Islands.'"

With so much secrecy, and with so little open manifestation of hostility, are the aggressive proceedings of this people conducted, that the oldest residents and the best-informed parties in our adjoining colony of Mauritius upon what is going on around them, acknowledge

themselves hoodwinked by the insidious tactics of the French government in those seas.

We had given ourselves some trouble to ascertain (from those interested in the movements of the French in these latitudes) by what agency they had succeeded in obtaining possession of Mayotta. And the most satisfactory information we were able to obtain elucidatory thereof, was that, like St. Mary's, it had been purchased from the natives. A little later, however, in our researches upon this point, we were so fortunate as to obtain the copy of a document which had been laid before the local government of Mauritius as early as in the year 1841, from which we shall now proceed to extract some materials that will help to dispel the mist that has hitherto hung over the proceedings of France in connexion with this their lately acquired settlement:—

"*Her Britannic Majesty's Ship Endymion,*
"*Johanna, 24th May,* 1841.

"Sir,—I have heard with much surprise that a proposal has lately been made to your majesty, by the captain of the French corvette Trévoyante, that your majesty should surren-

der the Island of Mayotta to the French nation; and that, upon your majesty's refusal to accede to this proposal, the French captain declared his intention of returning, in two or three weeks, to take forcible possession of this island.

"Considering the intimate series of friendship and alliance which have for so long a period connected the people of Johanna with the English nation, I feel assured that the intelligence of such a proceeding, on the part of the French captain, would not be received with indifference by my august mistress, the Queen of England; and I shall not fail to transmit to my government, by the earliest opportunity, this information upon the subject. I shall, at the same time, have much pleasure in reporting the earnest desire expressed by your majesty, that the Johannese should continue to be united to England by the same friendly ties as under your majesty's predecessors.

"Allow me, sir, to take this opportunity of thanking your majesty for the assistance I have received from all your majesty's officers in obtaining the supplies required for the use

of her Britannic Majesty's ship under my command.

"I beg to remain,

"Your Majesty's most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed) "H. W. GREY, Captain."

From the document containing the above, we further extract the King of Johanna's own explanation of, and feelings upon, the very modest mission of the French corvette.

"She came to this island," said King Salem, "to endeavour to make peace between me and the Madagascar people of Mayotta Island, which was not accomplished, in consequence of my observing, 'How can I make peace with a man who keeps my island (Mayotta) and property by unfair means, and, having taken my people, sold them to Tortigue, at a port in the northward of the Island of Madagascar?'

"The captain of the French corvette, in reply, said, 'If you will let me have the Island of Mayotta, I have nothing more to say; if you resist, I shall bring a force in two or three months, and take possession of it: and, recollect, by so doing, you make war against the

French; at the same time, it will be a good thing for France if you do, as we shall then take and keep possession of this island.'"

To this the king, Salem, replied, "These islands are not my own, but held in trust by me from my friend and ally, Victoria, the queen of England; therefore, I cannot make any arrangement about giving up the island without first consulting her."

At the close of this remarkable document, we meet with the following paragraph, with its accompanying signatures:—

"This conversation took place in King Salem's house, at Motambao, Johanna, in presence of the undersigned.

(Signed) { "W. TINNS, R.N.
"JAMES R. KNAPP, Surgeon,
"Ship Proserpine." *

Whilst meditating a descent upon Mayotta, the French, as we have shewn from the

* We are unable to afford any explanation of the circumstances which led to the above-mentioned parties being present during this conversation; or, indeed, as to the character and position of those parties themselves. We presume the Proserpine to have been a merchant vessel.

letter of King Salem, were also trying to juggle him out of Johanna. Nor is this all; they had irons also in the fire ready to be made use of in connexion with a third of the Comoro Islands, viz. Mohilla; for, in the same year 1841, the chiefs of that place addressed themselves in a letter to the governor of Mauritius, entreating protection from him against the same marauders. The letter is so characteristic of the simplicity and mildness of character of the Comoro Islanders, that we subjoin a translation of it for the reader's perusal:—

"*To the Governor of Mauritius.*

"Boana Somary, governor of Mohilla, sends salutation, with all the people of Mohilla, to your excellency, and informs you that Ramanetaka* is dead. Now, we declare that he

* The history of this Ramanetaka is at once interesting and eventful. He was a Malagasy prince, and own-cousin to Radama; and, at the time of his kinsman's death, was enjoying the governorship of an important port on the western shores of the island. It has already been remarked, that one of Ranavalona's earliest steps, on ascending the throne of Madagascar, was to remove all and every connexion of her predecessor's whose presence in her kingdom might be an eye-sore, or, by possibility, an

governed Mohilla, and did not govern it harshly, and did not love war; nor did he hire us out for money to increase his own wealth; but, when he arrived in our country, he promoted the welfare of us and of our wives and children; and, on that account, we made him king; for such is the custom in our country, Mohilla, to make king of him who defends our wives and children, and, therefore, we made him king. And when the time came that God took him, and he was gone, we then caused

inconvenience to her majesty. Ramanetaka, on this account, was one of the first upon whom Ranavalona turned her attention, with a view to his removal. He was summoned (under pretence of taking the oath of allegiance) to the capital; and, having had timely warning of what was about to befal him, he at once complied with the warrant of the soldiers who came to apprehend him. Ramanetaka had bargained with an Arab sloop to be at his command, and he found no difficulty in prevailing on the guard to embark with him therein, under pretence of shortening the land-journey before them. The chief also succeeded in recommending them to remain in the boat at the sloop's stern, as a preferable mode of escaping seasickness! Thus far favoured in his plans, Ramanetaka divided the rope which attached the latter to the vessel, and exclaimed, "Life is sweet!—I am off!" He then sailed for Mohilla, where he was well received, and placed in authority over that island.

For this anecdote, *vide* "Narrative of Persecutions in Madagascar," by Messrs. Freeman and Johns, pp. 16, 17.

his child, Safisody, to reign of our free will, over all the people of Mohilla.

"Now, with regard to our state in our island, we do not desire war with any people; but it is they that hasten to fight against us. It is God that is our defender. But as for the people of Mohilla, our practice is to work, that we may thereby support our wives and children, for we have no quarrel with any people,

"Say the Governor of Mohilla and all the Chief People of Mohilla.

"And, respecting the affair of Monsieur Douronvalle, his statements are altogether false, for we owe him nothing at all,* †

"Say the Governor," &c.

Mohilla and Johanna, however, for the moment escaped; but Mayotta speedily became a French possession, and has ever since sparkled amongst the other gems of Louis-Philippe's diadem. No matter as to the diplo-

* Probably alluding to the French captain of the corvette Trévoyante, or to some other such individual who may have been at Mohilla on a similar errand.

† The document containing the foregoing letters upon the subject of the French encroachments on the Comoro Isles, was transmitted by the Rev. Mr. Johns (the last of the Protestant missionaries in Madagascar) to a friend in Mauritius, who had also laboured in the same field with

matic *finesse* employed in the acquirement of it, the world is told that his majesty purchased it, and the world troubles its head no further in the matter.

Monsieur Laverdant, speaking of the policy of France in these seas, observes, in connexion with Nosibé and Mayotta, that "the government of the French Island of Bourbon hinted to that of the mother-country that it was necessary to find a substitute for Mauritius in the track of the vast English commerce, and to establish there a military post, as well as a rendezvous for our men-of-war and privateers;" and, for the attainment of this united object, it suggested that, on the north-west of Madagascar, the most befitting site would be found. After stating, then (as we have given in his own words), that Monsieur Thiers had ordered Nosibé to be seized, Laverdant thus remarks upon the occupation of

himself. Mr. Johns had returned to Madagascar, with the hope of extending the Gospel in the north-western districts of the island, where his position enabled him to gain much information relative to the operations of the French at Nosibé. These letters, &c. were laid before the local government of Mauritius by the party to whom they were transmitted; but her majesty's ministers decided upon non-interference in the affairs of the Comoro Islands.

Mayotta. "The impulse was given" (alluding to the capture of Nosibé), "and, in seizing Mayotta the same year" (en s'emparant cette année de Mayotta), "the minister of the 29th October enriched France with a military station, and a magazine of the very first importance."—P. 108.

Thus have we given the reader some insight into the modern tactics of the French in that portion of the southern hemisphere which falls more immediately within the scope of our present subject to deal with. Already have they opened an active commerce along the Mozambique and Zanguebar coasts, and have located a resident, or envoy, in Abyssinia; and that their occupation of Nosibé and Mayotta are but preparatory measures to their possessing themselves of "la grande île Africaine" —Madagascar, appears to have been openly asserted by more than one of the French ministry itself,* and strongly advanced, besides,

* "A very categorical declaration to this effect was last year made by the Minister of Marine, and the Director of the Colonies. "France," say they, "has taken up a position on its north-west coast, in order to extend her sovereign sway over the great island itself, in order to subjugate the country, in order to be in a posture to enforce our incontestable rights."—DÉSIRÉ LAVERDANT, p. 109.

by the most recent French writer upon Madagascar.*

But, so long as Monsieur Guizot continues to exercise so great an influence over the policy of the French government, we may expect to see these flattering castles still floating awhile longer in thin air. We have already, in a preceding page, observed upon a remark he has the credit of having made on the subject of France's pretensions to Madagascar. "Je suis convaincu," says this statesman, "que la France ferait, passez moi le mot, une folie en essayant de renouveler de grands établissements coloniaux à Madagascar. Nous n'avons aucun dessein de nous servir de Nosse-Bé pour rentrer dans l'île de Madagascar. Certainement, tant qu'il me sera donné d'avoir quelque influence dans les conseils de la couronne et de mon pays, je m'opposerai, pour mon compte, à ce que nous laissions attirer

* "Within these last two years, two acts,—the occupation of Nosse-Bé and that of Mayotta,—indicate that the attention of government is directed afresh to the great African island."—DÉSIRÉ LAVERDANT, p. 108.

"Mayotta and Nosse-Bé possess, then, a real importance; but of what avail would be these two points without the great island (la grande terre)?"—Ibid. p. 109.

et compromettre dans les affaires et les luttes de la grande île elle-même."

M. Laverdant's chagrin at the views of M. Guizot (and somewhat similar ones on the part of M. Thiers), in connexion with Madagascar, is truly deserving of our compassion.

" Par malheur," he writes, " l'esprit public semble aujourd'hui fermé à l'idée de la colonisation, et nous voyons avec douleur des hommes éminents encourager le préjugé du vulgaire."—P. 14.

" Est-il vrai que le génie de la France soit contraire à l'œuvre colonisatrice ? Est-il vrai qu'aux Français soient interdites la fonction et la gloire de donner la vie aux contrées sauvages, et d'initier les peuples barbares à la civilisation ? L'histoire du passé suffit pour répondre victorieusement à cette accusation."

The history of the past does, indeed, respond to the accusation! St. Domingo, for instance, and Madagascar in former, Algeria and Tahiti, in later years!

And then, as an exposition of the arguments which call upon France to possess herself of Madagascar, M. Laverdant has the

following, amongst a host of similar ones, each more redolent of French modesty than the preceding :—

" Il est de principe, dans le droit des gens, que, lorsqu'un peuple a planté son pavillon sur une terre nouvelle, et lorsque par des actes nombreux il a témoigné de sa volonté d'étendre, de continuer sa domination, il est de principe que cette terre ne peut plus être saisié par un autre peuple.

" Avons-nous planté à Malegache notre pavillon souverain, et avons-nous témoigné l'intention de conserver et de developper cette conquête ?"—P. 87.

" Malegache est sur la route de tous les vastes empires orientaux de l'Angleterre. En cas de guerre, c'est la plus formidable position qui puisse menacer la puissance Anglaise."—P. 20.

" Ce point du globe est donc, pour un peuple qui peut avoir encore à lutter avec l'Angleterre, le post militaire le plus important. L'Ile de France, que tant de beaux souvenirs guerriers et littéraires attachaient à la France, est devenue Maurice, et le pavillon rouge flotte sur les vastes citadelles construites au bord de

ses rades par l'Angleterre. Il faut donc remplacer cette position perdue."—P. 21.

Again :

" Malegache nous offre ses baies et ses golfes magnifiques : de là, si la guerre revenait,.. nous couperions tous les courants commerciaux de l'Angleterre, du Cap de Bonne Espérance aux mers Arabiques, aux mers de l'Inde et de la Chine ; et nos croiseurs, descendant le canal, poursuivraient encore toutes les expéditions de l'Australie et New-Zélande. Malegache paralyserait Maurice, Malegache affamerait Maurice ; car cette colonie tire des ports de la côte orientale une partie des approvisionnements, et notamment toute sa viande de bouchière. Malegache conquise par la France est aisément défendue ; elle se nourrit elle-même. Maurice demande aujourd'hui toute sa subsistance à l'extérieur ; en temps de guerre, cette île, qui ne produit plus de vires, serait surprise et ruinée."— Pp. 22, 23.

These latter hints are thrown out with but too much truth. Already, in Mauritius, have many of the necessaries of life been *trebled* in cost since Madagascar closed her ports against us.

"Que l'Isthme de Suez soit ouvert, *notre* île ne perd rien de sa grande importance! C'est toujours le foyer d'où rayonne la vie sur le vaste continent d'Afrique; c'est toujours le lier entre cette partie du continent et l'Europe; c'est toujours l'escale entre l'Europe et les vastes possessions Anglaises du Cap; c'est toujours un poste d'observation d'où la France peut étendre sa main sur la grande route du commerce entre l'occident et l'orient."—P. 22.

Again:

"En vue des événements qui peuvent s'accomplir dans le Levant, tout le monde a compris quelle prépondérance nous donnait notre colonie du Nord d'Afrique. Dans la prévision de la lutte qui peut s'engager un jour au centre de l'Asie, entre les deux colosses Anglais et Russe, il faut se préparer une autre position plus avancée, d'où la France puisse surveiller les mouvements du monde Asiatique. Que l'Angleterre et la Russie se disputent l'Asie: l'Algerie et Malegache donnent l'Afrique à la France. Quand la route overland par l'Isthme de Suez viendra à être ouverte, les riches possessions Anglaises du Cap n'ont plus aucune valeur politique. Malegache et l'Algerie nous donnent alors une suprématie qu'aucune puis-

sance établie à Constantinople et jusqu'en Syrie ne peut combattre ; et ces deux postes, ces deux empires, nous permettent de maintenir la neutralité de l'Egypte et du grand passage."—Pp. 22, 23.

M. Laverdant then quotes the following from the "Voyage du Sieur Dubois," undertaken soon after the first early occupation of Fort Dauphin :—"Le mesme jour, Monsieur l'Amiral prist possession de l'isle au nom du roy ;" upon which he makes the following conclusive remark,—

"*Ainsi*, le fait de prise de possession par la France, non pas seulement de quelques points sur la côte orientale, mais de L'ÎLE ENTIÈRE *est un fait* ÉVIDENT, INDÉNIABLE."—P. 92.

Evident and undeniable indeed ! even, we should think, to the understanding of "an English government," which, M. Laverdant informs us, "would refuse to acknowledge the sun when shining, if thereby they could interrupt the colonial developement of all other countries !"

We shall wind up our extracts from this modest *brochure* with the following unanswerable appeal in support of France's title to possess herself of Madagascar :—

" Les droits que nous prétendons sur Madagascar impliquent des devoirs; ils nous imposent l'obligation d'initier à notre civilisation les peuples Malegaches. Remplissons cette mission sacrée" (the devil can quote Scripture, &c.) " si nous voulons encore être un grand peuple devant le monde."—Pp. 159, 160.

" C'est une guerre sainte, car il s'agit de secourir des hommes asservis sous un joug infâme et d'arracher toute une race aux tortures de l'empoisonnement; c'est une guerre utile et glorieuse, car il y a à Malegache une source immense de richesses à ouvrir, un magnifique empire à conquérir pour la France."—P. 160.

In reviewing that important part of the present sketch which relates to the connexion with, and the views of France towards, Madagascar, we have felt it our duty to enter somewhat at length into an examination of the pamphlet before us, inasmuch as it has been received with much attention and indulgence in France; and, from embracing a period in politics (in connexion with the southern hemisphere), the most recent that has been given to the world, it claims a natural title to be heard on the subject of which it treats.

In a preceding part of this inquiry, we have

expressed the opinion that England would find herself called upon to interfere in the affairs of Madagascar, if only with the view to interrupting those shocking outrages on humanity which compose a natural element in the scheme of Ranavalona's government, and with some idea of which we have endeavoured, in the preceding pages, to familiarise the reader. That it is unnecessary to annex Madagascar to the British empire for the attainment of this end, we need not take up the time of the reader by attempting to make apparent. Neither do we insist on the necessity of England's renewing a commercial intercourse with the country for the accomplishment of this first of objects; for the latter will follow as an almost certain consequence upon any success we might meet with in softening the minds of the people by the reintroduction of Christianity amongst them.*

* "I am convinced that the first step towards a nation's temporal and social elevation is to place amongst them the tree of life, when civilisation and commerce will entwine their tendrils around its trunk, and derive support from its strength. Until the people are brought under the influence of religion, they have no desire for the arts and usages of civilised life; but that invariably creates it. The missionaries were at Tahiti many years, during which

No more fitting opportunity can ever await the mother-country to insist upon an interference in the present scheme of government in Madagascar than now presents itself. Whilst we refuse to suffer France to aggrandise herself by the occupation of that island, let us meet her more than half way in endeavouring to remove Ranavalona and her chiefs from the authority which they have usurped, and in substituting such an one in her place as shall be a guarantee for the future interests and protection of the people; and which, above all, shall engage to receive an accredited British agent at the capital, together with a mis-

they built and furnished a house in the European style. The natives saw this, but not an individual imitated their example.

"In the South Sea Islands alone, many thousands of persons are at this moment wearing and using articles of European manufacture; in the more advanced stations, there is scarcely an individual who is not attired in English clothing, which has been obtained in exchange for native produce. The natives in a barbarous state possess not the knowledge requisite for turning the capabilities and productions of their islands to good account. The sugar-cane was indigenous to Tahiti; but it is only since the inhabitants have been Christianised and taught by the missionaries, that they have manufactured sugar, and thus converted the cane into a valuable article of commerce."—*Vide* WILLIAMS'S *Narrative of Missionary Enterprise.*

sionary body proportioned in extent to the capabilities of the island. Whether the British government will be ready to avail itself of the present opening to render this measure of good to the country, we have yet to learn; and, whether in the case of her willingness to do so, that of France will consent to sink those pretensions so speciously set forth by Laverdant, for an object so praiseworthy, is a question of still greater moment to determine. But, be the issue of the present crisis what it may, no indirect interference in the affairs of Madagascar can be productive of any benefit beyond the moment, unless it be based on the primary removal of Ranavalona and her party from power.

In proof of this position, it is only necessary for the reader to revert to the recent letter of her Malagasy majesty to the governor of Mauritius. During the whole of our intercourse with her she has adopted the same tone. A late governor of the Isle of France (Sir William Nicolay) had frequent occasion to despatch British men-of-war to her coast, for the purpose of protesting against her tyrannical proceedings towards British subjects, who had settled in Madagascar upon the

faith of the treaty we had entered into with Radama; upon some of which occasions her majesty adopted gracious expressions of regret, &c. &c., but more generally excused herself with the argument, that "Madagascar and its productions are mine; and I am as much the sovereign of that island as Victoria is of England. I do not interfere with what the queen of England chooses to do in her country; and, on the same principle, I will not suffer any foreign interference with my policy or actions!"

The avowal of such a spirit towards foreigners, together with the recent practical proofs* she has afforded us, that she will lose no opportunity of acting up to her word, is assurance sufficient that we can hope for nothing less than treachery and falsehood from Ranavalona, should the attempt even be made to "open a fresh account" with this woman upon a more promising footing than hereto-

* In addition to the recent ill-usage of Mr. Heppick and the subsequent treatment of the traders in Madagascar the reader will not forget the massacre, a few months ago on her coast, of a lieutenant and boat's crew of her majesty's ship Cleopatra, for which no sort of retribution was afforded by her majesty's government.

fore. "Let no such" one "be trusted!" If it were her ignorance alone that we had to combat, something might be hoped for by yielding awhile longer to her exactions and injustice; but we have reason to fear that her knavery is far more conspicuous than her want of knowledge; and her pride, perhaps, than either: of which her contemptuous treatment alike of French and English, for the last sixteen years, is a prominent illustration.*

* This quality is remarkably conspicuous in the character of the higher orders in Madagascar. One incident, corroborative of it, has already been alluded to, upon the occasion of Captain Kelly's first conference with the authorities at Tamatave. In addition thereto, we may mention the following anecdote, which strongly illustrates the shrewdness as well as pride of the higher classes of this people. When the Conway was despatched, in June 1845, from Mauritius, with a view to protecting the English residents at Tamatave, the demands of the Mauritian government upon Ranavalona, were drawn up, extraordinary as it may seem, under the signature of the colonial secretary, George Dick. The governor of Tamatave, at once struck with the fact, exclaimed, "What! Who is this George Dick? Does the governor of Mauritius deem the governor of Tamatave a less important person than himself, that he deputes a subordinate to communicate with him?" Whereupon he declined to receive the said despatch at all!

If, then, Great Britain should now feel determined to enter in earnest upon the task of rescuing the Malagasy people from their present deplorable condition, the first step of such a policy must be the removal of Ranavalona and her satellites from power, and the reorganisation of authority upon a new and more natural basis. That such an undertaking would be attended by no extraordinary difficulties, may, we think, be presumed from the fact, that many thousands of her subjects prefer to drag on a precarious existence in the forests (to which they have fled, with a view to escaping the terrible feudal service she has imposed upon them), rather than continue to live under her yoke; and who would hail the appearance of any foreign power which offered them protection and support. To this fact may be added another, that the extensive Sakalave tribes, which people the western coast of the island, are at open war with the Hova power; and, it is generally believed, would welcome an European armament—if only that it afforded them the means of beridding themselves of the presence of such an enemy: a fact sufficiently proved by the

good understanding they have always kept up with the French at Nos-Beh and St. Mary's Island.*

Let France only drop her tinsel pretensions to the possession of Madagascar, and co-operate, on principles of humanity alone, with Great Britain for the realisation of this great end, and the attainment of the object before us will not be difficult. On the other hand, should M. Guizot be overruled in the line of policy to which he has hitherto expressed himself determined to adhere in connexion with Madagascar, and have to witness France's appropriation of what, in the French Chambers, has been well defined as "une Algérie à quatre mille lieues;" adieu, then, to the prospects of Madagascar, for the present

* We must qualify this remark by explaining that, as far as we can procure information to be relied on, the Sakalaves have manifested, at all times, a good disposition towards the French at St. Mary's and Nos-Beh, so long as the latter have refrained from oppressing them. But the native Sakalaves in those islands have, of late, been enrolled, by their French employers, into the feudal system of slavery, whence has since arisen, we understand, towards the latter a very different feeling on the part of the tribe in question, who have become fully alive to the interested policy of their foreign neighbours.

century at least; although the exchange from a native to a French government would, at least, give them the advantage of a greater security to life, whilst their present feudal servitude would probably undergo an amelioration by passing into the form of Gallic slavery.*

* Dr. Keith, in his introduction to the "Evidence of Prophecy," has committed a strange error in the following passage:—"Slavery, which prevailed in every state, is now unknown in every Christian country throughout Europe."—P. 13. If the remark be intended to be received literally, the writer of it is certainly correct; but if, on the contrary, it has reference to those countries also where European governments exist and the Christian religion is in general operation, nothing can be more erroneous —*videlicet*, the French and Spanish colonies.

If one might form an opinion of the probably salutary operations of the Catholic religion in Madagascar, from the destructive consequences of another (in every respect its converse in spirit and practice), amongst the native inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands, it behoves every zealous Christian to wish for its introduction! After a few general expressions of horror ("quant aux Protestants, aux rigides Méthodistes, leur action, il faut le dire, est souvent funeste sur les terres nouvelles") at the fatal tendency of our Protestant missionary labours amongst the South Sea Islanders, M. Désiré Laverdant opens the following disastrous chapter of events to our notice.—"Des documents certaines établissent que depuis ces dernier temps une mortalité effrayante décime la population

Should the Malagasy people be fortunate enough to excite in Europe an active and disinterested sympathy in their future condition; we earnestly hope that the feeling will not be allowed to cool before a demonstration

des Sandwich : c'est là le fruit de l'action des Européens, et particulièrement des Méthodistes. La régime puritain, vigoureusement imposé, a attristé ces pauvres sauvages ; le bouleversement jeté brusquement dans leur habitudes a porté atteinte à la santé générale. Au moment où les matelots Chrétiens leur défendaient le bain et affublaient leur nudité d'habits lourds et gênants. Ainsi emprisonnés dans des haillons et éloignés de l'eau, où ils se plongeaint chaque jour enjouant, la malpropreté a développé, entretenu et exaspéré chez eux des maladies de peau terribles. Ces pauvres gens, qui apparaissaient tout misselants et lustrés, dans leur nudité naïve et saine, à l'Européen surpris, et le salvaient de si doux sourires, aujourd'hui passent tremblants et honteur, déguenillés, puants et flétris, sous le regard du missionaire ; et lui, pour un tel succès, élève stupidement vers Dieu ses actions de grâces. Allez ! Dieu détourne sa face de votre œuvre maudite, et il prend en pitié vos misérables folies !

" Le gouvernement de France ne permettra pas que de telles cruantés soient commises dans le pays où flotte notre pavillon. S'il y avait chez nous de pareils fanatiques, on ne leur laisserait pas la liberté de faire le mal.

" Prêtres Chrétiens, comprenez mieux votre sublime et sainte mission. Et vous, nos frères Catholiques, observez avec soin les faits, et voyez que votre supériorité sur les Protestants vous l'avez due à la satisfaction que

be made by England or France, or by both, in their favour. We do not pretend to dictate to those powers the line of conduct to be pursued towards Ranavalona and her supporters; but we may venture to intrude an

votre église donne à l'élément humain, à la tolérance, au luxe."—Pp. 152, 3.

Notwithstanding the above *very flattering* testimony in favour of the Protestant missionary labours, and the frequent expression of such sentiments as "Heureux encore lorsque les missionaires appartiennent à la religion Catholique," it is surprising how much M. Laverdant's own pamphlet gives the lie to the very favourable opinion he affects to entertain towards the French disseminators of our Saviour's religion! Thus, in one place, he repeats (what, indeed, is matter of history) the scandalous story of a French Catholic church dignitary, who attempting, by every species of violence and fraud, to force Romanism upon the native Malagasy, was himself murdered for his pains, and the entire French expedition (of which he was an illustrious member) summarily removed from their country, partly through the agency of the sword, and partly by a timely flight from the island!

This Romanist, adventuring to speak upon a subject of which he is palpably most ignorant (namely, the religion of Protestants), presumes to say,—"Les Catholiques sement l'évangille; les Protestants opposent la Bible au Nouveau Testament, qu'ils brûleraient volontiers."—P. 149. Such perversions of the truth as this almost excuse our violation of the command,—"Be gentle unto all men,

opinion, that the marching an army to the seat of government, although perhaps the most expeditious, would by no means constitute a necessary step for the accomplishment of the object they had in view. By occupying Tamatave and Foule-Pointe ourselves, or by

in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." M. Laverdant cannot be ignorant that, if the pastors of his creed "sow the gospel," they do not allow it to be reaped in its native purity! Sowing, as they do, a most corrupt, dishonest, and distorted translation of the original, they take care that the fruit shall not be reaped unless accompanied with the chaff of their translation from the Latin Vulgate. "When the popes discovered that they could hold the sceptre without the writings of apostle or prophet, they hurled them into the deepest darkness, until they seemed to perish from the memory of man. When the Inquisition was executing its direst cruelties on the human family, the Edict of the Council of Toulouse was published, which forbade the laity to read the Bible. The most remarkable era of papal activity and craft was when a Bull was issued, confirming the terrible law of Philip II., which made it death to sell, buy, keep, or read the Bible! In every country where the papacy obtained influence, it invariably succeeded in extinguishing the use of the Bible. The infidel and profane Louis XIV. openly exulted that his persecutions had cleared his nation of every man who read the Bible. In the bloody scenes of 1793, in which Robespierre enacted chief-fiend, the Holy Bible was fastened to the tales of apes and dragged through the streets!"—*Extracted from "The Spirit of the Vatican."*

replacing the present Hova authorities at those ports by such other native officers as would consent to govern the people (under European influence) with equity and kindness, we should strike a serious blow at the very spring of Ranavalona's resources; whilst these ports themselves might be held by a comparatively insignificant land force, provided they were supported by a man-of-war, so situated as to command the shore. In addition to the above, it would be necessary to blockade the few remaining points on the coast at which supplies are occasionally received from without.

By organising, in the next place, a native soldiery for the protection of the several points we might decide upon occupying, we should be enabled to withdraw our European land forces, and leave them after awhile to the protection of their own hearths, with the strongest incentives by which men can be actuated to defend themselves, viz. the preservation of liberty and life. By such a line of policy (cementing it yet more strongly by an offer of protection and employment to all who might resort to us with a view to escape the iron yoke of Ranavalona), the Hova power

would quickly, we are convinced, decline; and if her sceptre were not speedily torn from her by such united agency, it would fall of itself at length from her enervated grasp, and await the occupation of such power as we might determine to invest with it.

Such is a rapid outline of the extent of operations in which England and France, if uniting for such a work, would, in the writer's opinion, be called upon to engage, for the immediate amelioration of the Malagasy people, and the ultimate security to them of a form of government, by the displacement of the present one, upon which a lasting prosperity and happiness might be insured to them.

The attainment of such an order of things we deem infinitely preferable to the conjoint annexation of Madagascar to England and France, and eminently so to its occupation by the latter power alone.* As in

* Monsieur Laverdant evinces a pride in congratulating his countrymen upon the very favourable nature of the Malegasse disposition for the engrafting thereon of the French character:—"The Malegasse," says he, "love the French; they possess natural affinities with us, which

St. Domingo, some *Malegasy Toussaint* might arise in the country, in all respects more palatable to the people's own tastes as a governor, and, under proper tuition, more calculated to enlist the services as well as the sympathies of the people.

That Great Britain is called upon, on her own account, to do something for the renewal

render the English character distasteful to them; their tendency to artifice and trickery causes them to feel more at home with us" (M. Laverdant's countrymen must feel obliged to him), than with the English, who are a calculating people, ever on their guard; they are passionately fond of pleasure, and the English Puritanism ennuyées them to death."—Pp. 125, 126.

We shall borrow from M. Laverdant himself, an illustration or two of the pains which his countrymen, at different times, have been at to infuse a taste into the Malegasse bosom for "artifice and trickery." He tells us, on the authority of "un chroniqueur," that "the natives asked us" (the French) "how we contrived to possess ourselves of such large bars of iron as we brought with us? To which we replied, that we were in the habit of planting pins and needles in France, which in a certain time became such as excited their curiosity. Immediately poultry and eggs poured in upon us; for a pin they would give us eight eggs, and four or five fowls for a needle, and off they would then set to sow them, with the point in the air, as we told them was indispensable."

Again, from the same:—

of her late colonial commerce with Madagascar, the serious evils already felt at Mauritius sufficiently attest. The loss of "the great African island," as a market from which to draw our supplies of cattle for the purposes of draught and consumption, has already involved the people of that colony in an almost insupportable increase in the expense

"The natives are very subject to complaints in the head. During our early intercourse with them, we made them believe that they depended on an unhealthy vapour, which had become generated in the brain, and that in order to dissipate the same it was necessary to make an outlet for it in the head. They were fools enough, in consequence of this suggestion, to bore the necessary holes in their head; a sign" (observes our author) "that the amount of suffering they laboured under was not inconsiderable."—LAVERDANT, pp. 42, 43.

It is, indeed, not to be wondered at, that the native character should have acquired so great an affinity to that of a people manifesting such anxiety to form it after their own standard, and considering how imitative a species we belong to, a satisfactory exposition is afforded us of those "natural affinities" with the French character, which the natives of Madagascar are said, by M. Laverdant, to develope.

There is one point of view in which the affinity of the present sovereign of Madagascar with the character of the celebrated French monarch alluded to in the note of a preceding page, is eminently evinced. We allude to her

of the necessaries of life,—an evil which can only acquire additional weight in proportion as it is suffered to be kept up by the continuance of the present line of policy in Madagascar. From thus much experience of the disadvantages accruing to Mauritius from the loss of our commercial relationship with Madagascar, some idea may be formed of the truth of Monsieur Laverdant's assertion, that

respect for the Holy Scriptures. As soon as she had berid herself of the missionaries, she ordered her officers of state to collect all the books they had left behind them in the hands of the native Christians. "As the Bible was the largest book among the lot, it was fixed on by the officers to be read first. The beginning of the 1st chapter of Genesis came first in course. The officers found no fault with the first verse, but in the second, the word "darkness" occurred; and as the queen, it was argued, did not like darkness or anything being said about it, the whole book was at once condemned as improper to be used in the schools, or circulated in the country. They next took up a hymn-book, and a hymn was read, in which the word "Jehovah" happened to occur; the whole book was therefore immediately condemned. Then several of the Tracts and Catechisms, &c. were read, but there were either the words "Jesus Christ," or "Jehovah," or "darkness," or "hell," or "Satan," or "resurrection," &c. in all of them, and therefore they were all condemned."—*Narrative of Persecutions in Madagascar*, p. 144.

"Maligache paralyserait Maurice — Maligache affamerait Maurice."

But there is another point of view in which the establishment of Madagascar upon a new footing must be regarded with great advantage to our neighbouring colony of Mauritius, — we allude to the admirable facilities it would offer us for the introduction of labourers therein from that quarter. In addition to the fact, that the expense of importing workmen from Madagascar, as compared with that now incurred by bringing them from India, would undergo a reduction of at least one half (whilst their return passage would not involve more than one fourth of the present outlay): in addition to this, by no means immaterial consideration, the native Malegasy will be allowed by all who have had an opportunity of comparing the merits of both, to be capable of performing the work of two Indian coolies, whilst they are, by no comparison, a more hardy as well as industrious people, and eminently superior to them in those qualities which unceasingly incline the latter to vagrancy, or, to use an Indian mode of expression, to "marooning."

At the present time, not only do we not avail ourselves of the labourers which might easily be procured from the coast of Madagascar, but, by a most cruel policy of the local government of Mauritius, a positive interdiction was laid, some months prior to the attack upon Tamatave, against the landing of natives from Madagascar at our colony, even though flying for their lives from the pursuit of the sanguinary authorities of their country.

We shall conclude with the opinion of an authority well versed, from a long acquaintance both with Mauritius and Madagascar, in that part of the subject which we are now reviewing, and who, in alluding to the desirableness of British interference in the affairs of Madagascar, remarks :—*

"I am persuaded, that not only will immense benefit be thus conferred on Mada-

* Mr. Baker. We shall take this opportunity of suggesting, that should it be determined upon by the British government to negotiate with the Malegasy, and to renew such an understanding with them for the future as shall be some guarantee for the preservation of British interests in that quarter, the services of this gentleman would be

gascar, but an indefinitely long period of increasing prosperity and augmented commerce will be secured for the Mauritius, since Madagascar can at once and immediately supply us with labour and many other things that we want, and will receive from us in exchange the merchandise and manufactures which we are so able and willing to furnish. Thus our currency would be made to continually circulate within the limits of our own territory, or within the reach of its influence, and not be carried off, as it is liable to be, by our Chinese and other labourers, to fields whither the British manufacturers cannot follow it."

invaluable to us as resident or agent in Madagascar. A man of sincere and unobtrusive piety, and of the highest sense of honour, Mr. Baker combines also a rare amount of natural shrewdness, sagacity, and knowledge of the world. To which qualifications we have already added, a perfect acquaintance with the language and character of the people.

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